

IN PRAISE OF OLDER MEN
Why young women go for golden oldies
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BEST FOR BOOKS

Andrew Roberts on Ben Pimlott's biography of the Queen
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PRAMS AND PERKS

What the nanny of the Nineties demands
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BEST FOR JOBS

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SECTION 3

Relaxed Major earns show of unity

Tories clear their decks for election

By Philip Webster and Jill Sherman

MINISTERS cleared the decks ready for the general election yesterday by pruning controversial measures from the next parliamentary session to leave only populist Bills aimed at winning the votes of the "hardworking classes".

Expensive and contentious legislation, such as the introduction of identity cards and new rules on financing elderly people in nursing homes, has been dropped. Instead, the Government will concentrate on a crackdown on violent crime, benefit fraud and discipline in schools.

The pre-election campaign was reinforced by repeated calls for unity at the Conservative conference in Bournemouth, where John Major and Malcolm Rifkind swung the party behind the Cabinet line on Europe.

The Prime Minister was the star turn of the day as he discarded his jacket for an informal 70-minute question-and-answer session that overshadowed other speakers' policy announcements. His relaxed performance brought back memories of his meet-the-people campaigning style during the 1992 election campaign, which he intends to reproduce next year.

The session pleased party strategists, whose spirits were further lifted as it became clear that the representatives at the conference had no intention of rocking the boat and would have no patience with politicians who did.

Yesterday the appeals for the party to unite behind Mr Major were led by the Cabinet

rightwingers Peter Lilley and Michael Portillo, who are happy for the time being to abide by the Prime Minister's wait-and-see approach to a single currency.

Mr Lilley used his speech on benefit fraud to demand an end to bickering, saying he was sick and tired of Conservatives who fuelled the media by sniping at their colleagues. "In two minutes, they can undo all the good work you the party workers have done in a year."

Mr Portillo voiced similar sentiments at a fringe meeting, and in his conference speech today he will tell dissenters to pull their socks up and that the party needs "unity, unity, unity". Kenneth Clarke, the Cabinet's leading pro-European is also expected to steer clear of controversy when he addresses the conference today.

Yesterday Mr Rifkind won the support of the traditionally Euro-sceptic conference for the Cabinet line on a single currency. An early announcement ruling out membership would be unwise, against British interests and jeopardising the future of the City, he said. "To force a decision now just to differentiate ourselves from Labour would be to put party before country and, I suggest, the country would not be impressed."

Mr Major was also applauded when he called for caution. If the single currency went wrong it could "crack wide open the European Union as we have seen it build up over the last 25 years", he

said. And while he accepted that he could get "easy applause" by saying Britain would not join, he said: "If I did that and I then had no British voice in this great debate that will affect us, what would I then say to the British nation?"

The Government meanwhile tried to harden the impression that it was ready for a fifth term by promising new laws to make unions who call strikes in monopoly public services liable for damages. Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, said: "The Government will not stand by and see the public held to economic ransom again."

Mr Lang's plans would probably be put forward in the next Parliament. The coming session will concentrate on populist measures including Michael Howard's crime Bill and Mr Lilley's proposals to give financial incentives to job agencies that help lone mothers into work and a new Bill to give social security officials access to Inland Revenue and benefit agency data to track down fraud.

Gillian Shepherd will today announce proposals to allow teachers to impose "reasonable" detention on pupils without their parents' consent, an extension of the time limit for temporary exclusions and a plan to restrict parents' choice of school when their children have been expelled twice.

Matthew Parris, page 2
Conference reports, pages 8,9
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Strutting in their shirts: John Major and Brian Mawhinney stand jacketless before the Tory party faithful at Bournemouth yesterday

Benn claims the honours as parties get shirty

By Andrew Pierce
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BENN, the veteran left wing Labour MP, pioneered the political shirt sleeve look when he started taking his jacket off at public meetings 40 years before John Major and Tony Blair began squabbling over the idea.

Mr Benn, 71, who is equally at ease in a woolly cardigan as he is in a tweed jacket, was unequivocal last night about who was first to adopt the casual approach: "Me. I have been doing it for years," he said.

The Major and Blair offices swapped insults throughout the day after the Prime Minister abandoned his jacket during a question and answer session with activists at the Tory Party conference. Labour accused Mr Major of copying Mr Blair.



Tony Benn, in short sleeves and pipe: "I was the first," he said

Not everyone approves of the casual look now favoured by the party leaders. Lord Callaghan, the former Labour Prime Minister, said: "I would never have done it. I always wore my jacket. It never occurred to me to take it off. It would have been ill-mannered to have done so." Which speaks volumes for what he thought about Tony Benn.

Joe Haines, the Downing Street

press secretary to Harold Wilson, was equally emphatic that his former boss would never have sanctioned such a change in sartorial style: "He would have been too worried that his pipe would fall out of the jacket pocket. He always wanted that very close to hand."

Ian Mordaunt, the late left-wing MP for Bow and Poplar, was also an early pioneer of the practice. But the spin doctors today would never have allowed him near the television cameras: "He was rather big and sweaty," said a Labour MP.

Lord Hailsham of Marylebone, who served in the Cabinets of four Tory Prime Ministers, was appalled by the development. "Never in my day. Not even in the Cabinet room. I don't think Margaret would have approved either."

London terrorist was IRA man

The IRA named Diarmaid O'Neill, the terrorist suspect who was shot dead by the police in an arms raid in west London last month, as one of its members, describing him as a volunteer.

It added that it had delayed the statement, which will appear in today's issue of the Sinn Féin newspaper, *Republika*, out of respect for O'Neill's parents. They had asked for privacy at their son's funeral in Co Cork last week, which his Basque girlfriend, Karmele Ereno, attended. Page 5

Off his bike

Lord Tebbit, who urged unemployed people to get "on yer bike", said Britain's "cult of ageism" meant job prospects for executives aged 55 or over were bleak. Page 25

Prince consoles Dunblane parents at sombre service

By Alan Hamilton

THE Prince of Wales last night spent an hour in private with the grieving parents of Dunblane after attending a memorial service which took the shattered town one further step out of its darkness.

He met the parents in a church hall next to Dunblane Cathedral after the service commemorating the 16 primary school children and their teacher who were killed by the gunman, Thomas Hamilton. Six hundred bereaved parents, relatives and friends packed the cathedral along with policemen, ambulancemen, nurses, social workers and many others who had attended on the terrible events

of March 13 and their aftermath. Yesterday they sought faith and hope, and most had abandoned the black of mourning for less sombre clothes.

But they sat in a void of silence that was often tearful as parents of the murdered children or relatives in cases where the act was too painful, stepped forward to light a candle for each child as the slow litany of their names was read from the pulpit. They lit a larger candle, too, for their dead teacher, Gwenne Maylor. Distantly, a piper played a soft lament.

The Prince, who had been invited to attend by the be-

reaved, sat in the front row. Close to him sat Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary and Dunblane's MP, and George Robertson, his Labour shadow who has lived in the town for 20 years.

Outside the cathedral the town was deserted and silent, as shops closed out of respect. At the ill-fated primary school, children were sent home at lunchtime.

Inside the cathedral, the Rev Colin McIntosh, its minister, reminded his congregation that they were there not only to remember and celebrate the lives of 16 children and their teacher, but to mark a stage in

Continued on page 2, col 7

Hoax leads to call for press review

By Emma Wilkins

LORD WAKEHAM, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, today calls for an urgent review of newspaper conduct in the wake of the hoax which led *The Sun* to publish faked pictures of Diana, Princess of Wales.

In a letter to *The Times*, Lord Wakeham says the affair raises key issues over invasions of privacy and the use of the defence of public interest by newspapers.

The public as well as the Royal Family are having their confidence in the existing Code of Practice undermined after "a stream of injudicious stories centring on the private lives of public interest figures,

backed up only by the flimsiest of public interest defences", he says.

Public figures often choose not to complain in order to protect their children from possible prolonged suffering through an investigation by his commission, but newspapers must not take a lack of complaint as carte blanche to write what they like, he adds.

Calling for co-operation from all newspapers, Lord Wakeham goes on: "I believe we need now to examine all these issues carefully but urgently to see what lessons can be learnt."

Letters, page 21

Absent Estonia hand Scots victory in game that never was

By Kevin McCarrin in Tallinn and John Goodbody

THE opposition never stood a chance, principally because they refused to take part. At the Kadrioru Stadium in Tallinn, Estonia, yesterday, Scotland trooped out behind the referee, Miroslav Radoman, and prepared for kick-off in a World Cup qualifier. The other half of the field was empty, however, because Estonia, protesting over a change in the kick-off time, were still in their training camp some 30 miles away.

So it was that Billy Dodds knocked the ball off the centre spot for John Collins, the Scotland captain, to take a few steps forward before the official, with a blast of his whistle, brought the cursory action to an end. It is now expected that FIFA, the

sport's governing body, will rule that this was a 3-0 victory for Scotland, although its decision will not be known until November 7.

The only other time that a World Cup qualifying game has been forfeited occurred in 1974. The Soviet Union refused to play their play-off return leg in Chile because they disapproved of the right-wing regime of General Pinochet, who had seized power after a coup. Chile kicked off in the empty stadium in Santiago, ran the ball into the goal and then the referee immediately abandoned the match which was awarded to Chile.

Yesterday's non-events, however, completely failed to unsettle the 600 visiting supporters. "There's only one team in Tallinn," they yelled, and this time the old chant was nothing less than a statement

of fact. After the Scotland players left the field, one fan in a kilt ran on and, amid widespread jubilation, put the ball into an unattended net.

Estonians find no cause for merriment. On Tuesday night, Scotland complained about the unsuitability of the floodlights which had been installed for a match with a scheduled kick-off of 6.45pm. FIFA agreed that conditions were unacceptable and at 9am yesterday ruled that the game should begin in daylight at 3pm.

Estonia, refusing to comply, turned up as originally planned at 5pm. A small group of locals cheered, but Scotland had already departed. Somehow the day had brought two teams to an agreed stadium and still failed to produce any football.

World Cup reports, page 48



"I've bought the video of the Scotland goals!"

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F

Alongside him, however, the masterful Brian "Don't mess with me" Mawhinney was ill-advised to roll up his sleeves without warning. The intended impression was of chummy informality, but one felt a sudden anxiety that he was about to glass somebody. At

Or, rather, *most* Tory spir-its. Not Ted Heath's. In aspect and shape, Sir Edward increasingly resembles the cartoonist Giles's "Grandma". On the platform party he contributed an intense

In a separate enclosure sat another Euro-Blobby, Kenneth Clarke. The Chancellor seemed at times to be spilling over into the seat of the much trimmer Michael Portillo.



MATTHEW CONFERENCE

Why do all Euro-enthusiasts go pear-shaped? Is federalism fattening? Or does being fat make one a federalist?

Mr Rifkind's speech, read to a subdued audience, was greeted, once over, by sudden wild acclaim. Nobody looked more surprised than the Foreign Secretary himself, who, rooted to the spot, took his standing ovation like some

Rifkind, who had made a thoughtful case for unity around the Prime Minister's European compromise, was the beneficiary of his party's huge yearning for a closing of ranks. If a badly stuffed hyena had been wheeled on to the platform and uttered a plea for unity, it would have been re-

The Tory rank and file want speakers to thump the lectern and bash Brussels bureaucracy; but go further and they get nervous. Peter Lilley judged his audience shrewdly yesterday, offering more anti-EU rhetoric than substance.

The Social Security Secretary gains every year in assurance and poise. This year he was rewarded by the arrival of his wife Gail, who bounded up and planted a smacker on the back of his neck. This is a new kind of conference kiss. Such a

kiss is vaguely suggestive without implying an immediate proposition. The Lilleys may have been offering a metaphor for Mr Lilley's approach to his own leadership prospects. Where Michael Heseltine has stroked the Tory thigh, John Redwood grabbed the Tory knickers, as Michael Portillo lunged (last year) at the Tory bra. Peter Lilley was merely, so to speak, kissing the Conservative Party on the back of its neck. For now.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, offered his partner a courteous handshake.

Young as he is, there is something pleasantly 1960s about Mr Lang. Indeed he offered his own clever impersonation of Harold Macmillan, reciting:

*She didn't say Yes and She didn't say No.
She didn't say Stop and she didn't say Go.
She wanted to climb but she dreaded to fall.
So she bided her time and said nothing at all.*

Lang's target was Margaret Beckett. He was not satirising his party's position on a single currency.

FROM CHARLES BREMNER AND LEYLA LINTON IN BRUSSELS

After a year-long study ordered by the European Commission, Professor Charles Weissmann of Zurich University said there were reasons to doubt the prediction by Oxford scientists that BSE would fall to negligible levels in about five years. "I am not quite sure that one can say that if all the sources of contaminated feed are eliminated that the disease will completely disappear," he

The best way of establishing the facts was to start experiments in which monkeys would be fed increasing doses of BSE-infected tissue, the professor said. The long incubation time meant that the tests would have to be run over a period of ten years. Monkeys were the best means

"Both the marmosets we inoculated developed brain disease after about four years," she said. "Subsequent comparisons have shown a resemblance to the pathology seen in human victims of the new variant of Creutzfeldt-

An Agriculture Ministry scientist anonymously accuses the ministry of a "deplorable" lack of openness and the article cites the "uphill strug-

Society put pressure on government ministers", the journal said. The ministry admitted procedures could be "fairly bureaucratic".

hence that humans, if they are enough, may also be able to get the disease. We have to assume that no dose of BSE is safe."



The Prince and the Pea



Colin McIntosh leave the club



In an empty cathedral, the 17 candles flickered and danced. But there was no candle for the 18th victim of the massacre. There are some degrees of wickedness so dark that no mortal can find it in his heart to forgive.

Irish vote rethink


The Irish Government has dropped plans to allow emigrants to vote in elections. Emigrants were to be able to elect three members to the Upper House, but the plan has been dropped because of poor support from countries such as the United States.

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Harvest festival disrupted as choir draws line at singing praises of mid-air refuelling

Choristers walk out in protest at modern hymns

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

THE choir of a renowned 12th-century Norfolk parish church has been split after members resigned in protest at having to sing in praise of jet planes refuelling in mid-air at the annual harvest festival.

The vicar's three children and a handful of others have been left alone in the choir stalls at St Mary's, Wroxham, known as "the cathedral of the Broads", after Carole Tims, the music director, and 11 choristers walked out after "inappropriate words" were exchanged in the vestry.

The discontent began six months ago after the vicar, the Rev Andrew Parsons, 43, introduced new monthly services with the local United Reformed Church congregation

and asked the choir to sing. Mrs Tims, a music teacher, felt some of the more modern songs at the services were beneath their choral skills. She felt her choir was already busy enough leading singing at the church's traditional communion and evensong, as well as funerals, weddings and twice-weekly practices.

Two out of eight adult members resigned in protest and 11 children were withdrawn by parents, leaving seven children and a handful of adults.

The dispute reflects growing disharmony throughout the Church as clergy attempt to persuade congregations to accept modern worship methods, often including guitar-led

music groups and "hymns" with simple, repetitive, and catchy choruses. The problem has been exacerbated in some areas by a shortage of organists, who are often poorly paid for the hours they put in.

Mrs Tims, who has led the choir at St Mary's for six years, said: "Most of the parents are devastated and angry about what has been going on. The choir had 20 young people aged from 9 to 20 and they loved coming to church."

Nick Walmsley, the organist, who has also told the vicar he is "unable to assist" until the dispute is settled, questioned whether Estelle White's *Autumn Days*, from the BBC's *Come and Praise* book, in which God is thanked for

refuelling jet planes, should have been used. "As an honorary member of an RAF squadron I know what is involved in mid-air refuelling and these lads need all the praise they can get. But to some in the church it was a little strong."

Nicola Drake, 15, who beat 3,000 other hopefuls to become one of eight finalists in the BBC's 1993 Choirgirl of the Year contest, is one of the 11 withdrawn from the choir.

Debbie Kemp, who withdrew her daughter Imogen, 14, the head chorister, and her three other children, Alex, 13, Katie, 11, and Gavin, 9, said: "They used to sing amazing anthems and choral works. The modern hymns were a step-down from what they were capable of."

Mr Parsons, who has been at St Mary's since 1993, said: "I am very sad that this has come about. This has been brewing for some time. I'm afraid they've been a little inflexible. As a parish church, we have to cater to different people in the community."

He said most hymns used at his church were traditional but the modern hymn at the centre of the controversy was "a firm favourite with the children". He added: "They love singing it. That seemed to me a reasonable justification for having it. It may not be the finest of hymns but it is seasonal and appreciated."



The Rev Andrew Parsons, who said the disputed hymn was a children's favourite

Geldof and Yates agree to share child care

By Michael Horsnell

BOB GELDOF and his former wife, Paula Yates, have agreed to continue sharing the care of their three daughters after a four-day custody hearing in the High Court.

Mark Stephens, the solicitor acting for Miss Yates, read a joint statement last night agreed by Mrs Justice Hale: "Two concerned parents came to court to do what each of them believed was right for their children."

"They have now resolved matters in a way which they both believe to be in the best interests of the children. Bob and Paula have agreed that they will continue to share the care of their children. No further comment can or will be made."

Miss Yates, 36, flew from Australia for the hearing, leaving behind her boyfriend, the rock singer Michael Hutchence, and their two-month-old baby Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily.

Mr Geldof, 41, the former Boomtown Rats singer and Live Aid campaigner, applied two weeks ago for the custody of Fili Trixibelle, 13, Peaches, 6, and Pixie, 4. The request followed the disclosure that drugs squad officers had allegedly discovered opium in a Smarties tube under Miss Yates's bed at the Geldofs' former matrimonial home in Chelsea. The couple left the court separately last night, but earlier Mr Geldof had put his arm around Miss Yates and kissed the top of her head.

Verses that fuelled revolt in stalls



Carole Tims walked out

THE hymn the choir objected to, *Autumn Days*, was written by Estelle White about 20 years ago. It is featured in the BBC book *Come and Praise*, which has sold more than three million copies.

The first verse of the four-verse hymn goes:

*Autumn days when the grass is jewelled
And the silk inside a chestnut shell,
Jet planes meeting in the air to be refuelled.
All these things I love so well.*

Chorus:
*So I mustn't forget,
No, I mustn't forget,
To say a great big thank-you.*

Other verses rejoice in the smell of bacon, the taste of apple pie and "a win for my home team".

The hymn book's editor, Geoff Marshall-Taylor, said: "It is used at churches where there are a lot of children and vicars want to include something that youngsters will recognise."

Patient tells of drugs and porn on secure ward

By Kate Alderson

MEMBERS of staff on a ward at Ashworth high-security hospital supplied alcohol, drugs and pornographic videos to patients in return for cash, and allowed prostitutes and pimps on to the ward, a court was told yesterday.

Byron Tomlinson, 35, a former patient at the Merseyside hospital, who is standing trial at Liverpool Crown Court accused of falsely imprisoning a psychologist and a fellow patient at knifepoint, alleged that patients had been ordering goods from catalogues and selling them on to staff.

Tomlinson denies holding Laraine el-Jazairi, a psychologist, and Roger Packham, a patient, hostage in the ward's library in June 1994.

He told the court that, during his five months on Owen ward, large quantities of alcohol were brought on to the hospital ward by certain members of nursing staff. He said that cannabis was smoked openly and that there had been a level of collusion between some staff and patients. "On occasions the patients would have arranged places to pick up drugs and go on shoplifting trips."

In an interview with Detective Sergeant Andrew Donnelly of Merseyside Police, which was read out in court, Tomlinson said that he had arrived on Owen ward in January 1994 and had been threatened by patients and suffered racism because he is black. The court was told that he had witnessed a patient's room being set on fire while another patient was inside it and that he stopped going to therapy sessions because he was afraid his room would be burnt.

During the interview with the police officer, Tomlinson said: "I was extremely para-

noid. The ward was out of control. This gang was intimidating me to the extent where I was going over the edge. I couldn't trust the staff because they were in collusion with the gang."

In May 1994 Tomlinson told senior staff at the hospital about his allegations of activities "on the ward". Two days before the alleged hostage-taking, he told Dr Zena Crispin, his psychiatrist, specifically about these allegations. This triggered a search of patients' rooms and the ward generally during which some weapons were found and a number of patients, including members of the "gang" Tomlinson referred to, were transferred to another ward. Visits to patients were also cancelled for a day.

The next day, Tomlinson was preparing for a visit from his girlfriend which had been rescheduled from the day before. He was told that the visit had been cancelled and shortly afterwards, it is alleged, he burst into the staff room and took a long-bladed carving knife with which he chased members of staff while issuing threats.

"I never had any intention of hurting anybody," Tomlinson told the court. He said he fled into the library when he saw members of the control and restraint team coming on to the ward. He said that when he saw them he was worried about reports he had read in a newspaper about a prisoner dying after he was restrained and injected. Tomlinson then barricaded himself into the library where Mrs el-Jazairi and Mr Packham were. He told the court: "There was no intention of keeping them there as prisoners. Their presence in the library was saving my life."

The trial continues.

Duchess dismisses suicide reports

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THE Duchess of York, in an unusual public discussion of her state of mind, denied yesterday that she was suicidal or that the Queen had offered to pay some of her debts in return for custody of her children.

The Duchess, who has an overdraft estimated at £4 million, telephoned a New York newspaper to deny misleading reports picked up by American television and radio from British tabloid newspapers.

She made the call from her mobile phone outside the Royal Albert Hall just before she appeared as a guest presenter at the National Television Awards in London on Tuesday night.

Speaking to a reporter from the *New York Times*, the Duchess said: "I am the grown-up mother of two healthy children. Why on earth would I ever contemplate suicide? The idea of suicide never has and never will come into my head."

A spokesman for the Duchess yesterday confirmed that the quote was accurate. He said that the Duchess had spoken by telephone to the *New York Times* to "set the record straight" after recent newspaper reports that she was depressed.

In her conversation, the Duchess added that "there was no discussion and there won't be" with the Queen about paying the Duchess's debts. Despite similar denials from Buckingham Palace, it has been rumoured that the Queen offered to relieve the Duchess of her financial problems in exchange for a promise of silence and an agreement to live abroad and give up her children.

The Duchess said that she did "not know yet" if she would live abroad in future.

Sylvie Guillem has a way of dancing around tradition.

Her suppleness is legendary. Her command over those incredibly long limbs means that every performance evokes gasps from audiences around the world.

However, Sylvie Guillem is the first to point out that the exceptionally lithe body with which she has been gifted is a blessing in disguise: "You must work on this gift so that it does not become a defect."

That is why she constantly strives to push her performances beyond technique pure and

Guillem frequently finds herself in conflict with the traditions and rules of classical ballet.

"I have a way of being able to walk around tradition if it gets in my way."

Nevertheless, the classical form of her Rolex Oyster earns nothing but admiration.

"It is a beautiful watch. I fell in love with it."

Notice the pose that Sylvie Guillem has chosen to adopt for her picture. Just like her Rolex, it combines elegance and balance with supreme technical



simple. "After that, you work on something else: how to express things. I want people to remember me as a dancer who tells a story with her body." In pursuit of this aim, Mlle.

ability. The photographer paused for a moment to enquire what this ballet position is called.

With a smile, Mlle. Guillem

replied: "Six o'clock. Precisely."



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Bookie pays out after pupil's appeal improves exam grade

By David Charter, Education Correspondent

A SCHOOLBOY'S appeal against his GCSE French result was more like a stewards' inquiry for his family, who had wagered that he would achieve ten starred-A grades.

Peter and Sylvia Hodson of Great Barr, Birmingham, bet £20 at 5-1 that 16-year-old Tony would get the extra recognition for outstanding work when his results were published in August. The bet was placed for them by John Waterson. Tony's grandfather. The family were dismayed when Tony received nine starred-A's and one straight A in French. He asked the examination

board to remark the paper. It admitted a mistake and awarded him the starred-A this week, allowing Mr Waterson to collect £100 from William Hill.

Tony, a pupil of King Edward's School at Edgbaston, Birmingham, is now studying for A levels in English, history and French. He said: "My parents put on the bet in April as an incentive to make me work harder. But when my results came through I was really shocked. "Of all the exams I was expecting an A-star in, I expected one in French because it's my best subject. I'd heard about people de-

manding remarks, so I thought, 'It's worth £100 - why not?'"

The betting shop manager, Bryan Buckley, 34, said: "We didn't honestly expect to pay out on it. I know the school has got a good reputation, but I didn't think ten out of ten was humanly possible."

Graham Sharpe, a spokesman for the bookmaker, said it was increasingly wary of bets on examination grades because so many were won by students gaining extra motivation from the wager.

Tony's parents plan to spend the winnings on their son, who wants to be a sports journalist.

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Students threaten to quit Belfast if violence escalates

By NICHOLAS WATT
CHIEF IRELAND
CORRESPONDENT

STUDENTS at The Queen's University of Belfast said yesterday that they would abandon their studies if full-scale sectarian violence returned to Northern Ireland. Protestant and Roman Catholic undergraduates, who together condemned the resumption of IRA terrorism, said that the university's harmonious atmosphere would be destroyed by ill-for-all violence.

Queen's, which has played host to key events in Northern Ireland from the civil rights campaign of the 1960s to President Clinton's visit last year, was transformed by the IRA and loyalist ceasefires. Cross-community groups, which used to be of marginal interest, attracted wide support among students who had few friends across the divide until they arrived there. Senior members of the students' union now fear these groups may dwindle.

Students from outside Northern Ireland, who were put off studying in Belfast by the seemingly endless cycle of violence, came to the university in droves during the upbeat period after the ceasefires in 1994. Those from Britain and the Irish Republic are now thinking seriously about leaving.

A group of students from Dundalk, Co Louth, in the Irish Republic, said yesterday that they would go home if sectarian violence returned. Gareth Sien, 18, who has just started an undergraduate



Brannigan: he may return to the South

course in psychology, said: "If it gets really bad I would consider going back down South. I was horrified and shocked by the IRA bomb. I really don't want the whole thing to start again."

His comments were echoed by Claran Brannigan, 18, who enrolled at Queen's last year with six classmates from Dundalk. Mr Brannigan, who applied to study politics and social history at Queen's after the ceasefires, said: "Everyone's spirits have been deflated by the bomb and the troubles over the summer. It is sad because there was such a great atmosphere here during the ceasefires when everyone was so happy."

Students from Northern Ireland said they dreaded the prospect of renewed violence, although they said they would not leave the university. A Protestant and a Roman Catholic who struck up a friendship after enrolling on the university's undergraduate Spanish course last month

said they were despondent, although they insisted that all hope was not lost.

Karen Cuddy, 22, and Sinead McNally, 20, who are both from Belfast, said that politicians should put the bombs behind them and press ahead with the search for peace. Ms McNally said: "If there are kids fighting over a ball in the playground over a teacher will force them to share the ball. Why can't we treat our politicians in the same way? They have got to learn to live together in Northern Ireland."

Their despondency was echoed in the students' union building opposite the main redbrick Victorian campus of the university. Nigel O'Connor, the vice-president, said he was in a mood of "despondency, despair and depression". He said he feared for the cross-community groups at the university. The barricades could now go up with the imminent possibility of the loyalist ceasefire breaking.



Karen Cuddy, left, and Sinead McNally made friends across the sectarian divide

Police trace cars in barracks attack

By NICHOLAS WATT

IRA terrorists planned the double car bomb attack at the Army's Northern Ireland headquarters up to four months ago, the RUC said yesterday.

A Volvo estate car used to carry the second bomb into Thiepval barracks in Lisburn, Co Antrim, was sold on June 4. Another Volvo used in the attack was bought from a garage in the Lisburn area on July 3.

Police yesterday issued a photo of a heavily disguised man who bought a blue Volkswagen Passat last month for use as the getaway vehicle. The suspect, who is 40 and had a black beard, dark hair and black-rimmed glasses, bought the vehicle at a car auction on the outskirts of Belfast on September 23, exactly two weeks before the attack. Police recovered the burnt-out vehicle at Poleglass, near Lisburn, within hours of the explosions on Monday.

As police released details of the IRA attack, four lower-sixth pupils whose playing fields were showered with shrapnel called on the IRA to end its campaign. The teenagers, who were at Wallace High School when the explo-



Suspect who bought Lisburn getaway car

sions happened, described the bombs as "blasts from the past". Their statement said: "We have been described as tomorrow's generation. But by tomorrow our thirst for peace could be sacrificed by the relentless pursuit of political ends by a violent minority in our community."

The pupils said that younger children were on the fields as the bombs exploded. "Bombs do not discriminate. The pupils on the playing fields were of all creeds and colours. Bombs do not ask questions. They silence them. If you feel as we do, do not be silenced, stand up and be counted."

IRA behaves like Nazis, says Bruton

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

JOHN BRUTON compared the IRA's tactics to those of the Nazis yesterday. The Irish Prime Minister also accused the paramilitaries of cynically betraying the peace process in Northern Ireland.

Condemning the IRA for Monday's double bomb attack on the British army base in Lisburn, Co Antrim, Mr Bruton said that the IRA seemed intent on using violence when it suited its political objectives. "Those are the classic tactics of the National Socialists and Fascists during the 1920s and 1930s," he told the Irish parliament.

The Prime Minister said: "The Lisburn bombing is a cynical betrayal by the IRA of the peace process. The IRA have now completed a terrible triangle. We have had the IRA

bombings in Britain, we had an IRA murder in the Irish Republic, and now we have had IRA bombings — without notice — in Lisburn."

He questioned whether the IRA had modified its strategy during attempts by other parties to negotiate a peace. "Is the Armalite in one hand and the ballot box in the other the unchanged and unchanging political strategy of the republican movement?" The Irish State could not be held hostage to tactical IRA manoeuvres, he added.

Mr Bruton's condemnation of the paramilitaries was echoed by opposition leaders in parliament. Today a parliamentary debate will take place to press home the message that violence has no support in the Republic.

Mother is charged over baby son's death

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE daughter of a millionaire businessman attended court yesterday to face a new charge of killing her newborn son.

Emma Gifford, 21, had originally been charged with concealing the birth in April. But after spending months on police bail she was charged with infanticide during the ten-minute hearing at Haringey Road Magistrates' Court in central London. The new charge carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. She also still faces the original charge.

Miss Gifford, from Ashford, Kent, is the daughter of Michael Gifford, who retired as chief executive of the Rank Organisation leisure group last year.

The new charge follows the discovery of a baby's body in a freezer at a flat belonging to Miss Gifford's father in South Kensington, west London.

Miss Gifford was freed on unconditional bail until her next court appearance on November 13.



Gifford: two charges

Rapist who interrogated his victim given life

By JOANNA BALLE

A RAPIST who cross-examined his victim in court for six days about the intimate details of her ordeal was given two life sentences at the Old Bailey yesterday.

Ralston Edwards, whose victim waived her right to anonymity to campaign for a change in the law to prevent other women going through the same experience, was found in pre-sentence reports to have no signs of mental illness.

He was told by Judge Ann Goddard, who presided over his trial in August: "You have not shown the slightest sign of remorse but I do not add one day to your sentence because you contested the charges or defended yourself."

The attack on Julia Mason, who was not in court, had blighted her life, said Judge Goddard, who imposed a minimum sentence of 12 years' imprisonment.

Edwards, 43, was found guilty of twice raping Miss Mason during a 16-hour ordeal in which she was held prisoner in his flat in Catford, south London. He had a series of previous convictions for rape and violent assaults on women.

Miss Mason said that, during his cross-examination of her in August, Edwards was "reliving the rape moment by moment" and that it was like being raped all over again.

After the case Miss Mason's boyfriend, Billy Powers, said: "From day one, she wanted the law changed. Hopefully that will now happen speedily."

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Official figures on family spending show richest 20 per cent earn ten times as much as poorest

Nanny and a third car are signs of top earners

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A NANNY, a third family car and a well-stocked wine cellar are the status symbols of Britain's highest earners, according to the Government's survey on family spending.

Although the poverty gap has narrowed slightly in the past two years, the wealthiest 20 per cent of homes still enjoy ten times as much weekly income as the poorest 20 per cent — £875 compared with £84.

The best clue to a family's wealth today is how often they can afford to dine out. The richest, those whose income is at least £759 a week, spend £1,100 a year on meals in restaurants and cafes, almost three times the national average. The poorest, those who live on less than £82 a week, spend £140 a year eating out.

The richest 10 per cent of families spend an average of £730 a year on men's clothing, £830 on televisions, videos, computers and audio equipment, £1,100 on foreign holidays and £680 on cash gifts and donations.

They still choose to spend their money on the traditional symbols of privilege, spending six times as much on education as the average family and four times as much on medical insurance. One of the

surest signs of a very high income is a nanny or au pair. The richest Britons spend four times as much on domestic help and childcare as the rest of the population.

Only 25 per cent of the richest households manage with one car, 55 per cent have two and 18 per cent insist on having three. Yet a third of all British families have no car at all. The very rich spend an average of £390 a year on wines, more than three times as much as the rest of the population. The poorest homes prefer spirits and liquors to wine.

The wealthiest families were spending up to £800 a week on child care and domestic help.

£410 on private education, £180 on restaurant meals and £83 on health insurance, according to the Office for National Statistics. They put £58 a week into life assurance and pension funds and £17 into savings and investments.

However, the largest proportion of their earnings is clawed back by the State: they face average weekly bills of £230 income tax and £43 National Insurance to help to support the many families who rely on social security.

Thirty years ago only 8.4 per cent of people's income came from welfare benefits. Today, 14 per cent of family income comes from the State. The bottom fifth of the population

receives 82 per cent of its income from social security.

The annual Family Expenditure Survey questioned 6,800 households. The results help to form the weekly basket of goods used to compile the inflation figures. Food remained the biggest expense, with the average weekly bill rising by 5 per cent to £53, followed by housing which rose by 4 per cent to £48.

One of the biggest spending increases was on personal services including jewellery, cosmetics and medicines. Families now spend £12 a week, a rise of 7 per cent.

There were striking regional differences, with the Northern Irish spending most on bread, tobacco and women's clothing but the lowest on alcohol. Families in the North of England spent the most on meat pies. Shoppers were already buying less beef before the Health Secretary's admission that there could be a link between "mad cow" disease and its human equivalent. In the last quarter of 1995, households were spending £1.52 on beef compared with £1.89 a year earlier.

Family Spending (Stationery Office, £35.95).

Nanny state, page 17



Former nannies Samantha Franey, left, and Gabriella Vianello warn their staff against over-ambitious fathers

From Mary Poppins to status symbol

By BILL FROST

SHARPLY aware of her enhanced social standing as late 20th-century status symbol, today's top-drawer nanny expects a package of terms and conditions that Mary Poppins would never recognise.

A £13,000 tax-paid salary apart, she demands her own flat with private telephone line if living with her employers, sole use of a car and a mobile telephone. Taking out the rubbish is not among her duties, nor is submitting to any sexual demands made by the man of the house. She does not suffer fools gladly

either. Too much advice on bringing up the children from their mother is likely to end with a walkout and a blacklisting for the family.

Samantha Franey, co-director of the Dulwich Nanny Agency in southeast London, said that one of the most common problems encountered by her young women was the over-ambitious father. "I am afraid it is not at all unusual. You know the sort of thing... secret love letters and flowers. As a former nanny myself I know what happens and it is all very awkward. Recently one of our girls had to do a moonlight flit. She was working for a single father who had become very fond of her. He is blacklisted now, of course."

Tired of taking orders, Ms Franey, 29, set up the agency with Gabriella Vianello, another former nanny, 24 years ago. They have 6,000 young women on their books and as many again employed here and abroad.

"It is a very attractive package for a young woman," Ms Vianello, 28, said. "The salary — anything up to £13,000 a year — is tax-free. In the case of domestic staff the Inland Revenue expects the employer to pay tax and the National Insurance contributions."

The agency's clients include

barriers, solicitors, diplomats and captains of industry. "Life is good in the lap of luxury. However, the rich can treat a nanny like a piece of furniture and not as it should be, one of the family. They are so engrossed in their work that they just expect everything to be done. They fail to realise that for people in their position a nanny is not just a status symbol but a necessity."

The young women are handpicked and must satisfy a lengthy checklist. All must hold qualifications in childcare, be non-smokers and be ready to deal with any domestic emergency.

"Some duties are unacceptable, though," Ms Vianello said. "Rich people are far more likely to take advantage of nannies than the middle classes." Apart from taking out the rubbish, "working overtime is not acceptable when the nanny is not paid for it. We have had to let employers go for that."

Ms Vianello and Ms Franey both agree that today's nanny will not stay in the job too long if she has any ambition. "The life may be attractive to young women but they will get sick and tired of being given orders on bringing up children by someone who knows far less than they do about the subject."

Ulster pubs to open all day on Sunday

By A STAFF REPORTER

PROPOSALS bringing Northern Ireland's licensing laws in line with those of Britain were announced by the Government yesterday.

All-day opening hours for off-licences are among changes proposed by Malcolm Moss, the Northern Ireland Office Minister.

Pubs in the Province are currently limited to two sessions on Sunday with a break in between. Off-licences must shut at 9pm during the week and are not allowed to open on Sundays. As well as longer opening hours, children will be allowed into pubs provided they are with an adult.

Premises allowed to serve alcohol will be extended to include guest houses and conference centres. The ban on restaurants having a bar will also be lifted.

The proposals were announced after a two-month consultation period during which more than 700 responses were received from members of the public and licensees. Announcing the outcome, Mr Moss said that he had agreed to abandon a draft proposal for a system of penalty points to deal with clubs that breached licensing laws. He hoped that the proposals would come before Parliament "in the near future".

Quarter of Britons' wine 'comes from Calais'

By A STAFF REPORTER

MORE than a quarter of wine drunk in this country is bought in Calais and in eight bottles of spirits is purchased by cross-border shoppers, according to a survey by the drinks industry.

The figures were criticised, however, by Customs and Excise which said that the survey by the Wines and Spirits Association had been based on a single day. Customs' figures, based on interviews with 48,000 drivers at ports this summer, suggested that about one in eight bottles of wine and one in 13 of spirits are bought abroad.

Customs said that the annual loss to the taxpayer is about £60 million on spirits, £110 million on wine and £40 million on beer. The association said that the figures represented a loss of £145.30 per car for the Exchequer. It calculated the total shortfall, including other ferry routes but excluding beer and the Channel Tunnel, at £573.1 million, about 10 per cent of the Exchequer's total income from excise duty on drink.

The survey said that the number of vehicles arriving at Dover without alcohol is one in 50, compared with one in five last year. The association is pressing the Government for a gradual reduction in duty to bring the United Kingdom into line with France.

Poster 'dehumanising'

POSTERS promoting a new Harvey Nichols store in Leeds have been criticised by the city council as being degrading to women (Carol Midgley writes).

The posters show the models Jodi Kidd and Susie Bick wearing a collar and dog lead alongside the slogan "Harvey Nichols Leeds (not follows)". Doreen Lewis, deputy chairwoman of the council's women's committee, who

has asked the council to complain to the Advertising Standards Authority, said that the image suggested women needed to be kept under control. "It's not simply degrading, it's dehumanising."

A spokeswoman for the store said the dog leads were simply a pun on the city's name. "We would never be involved in anything setting out to degrade women."

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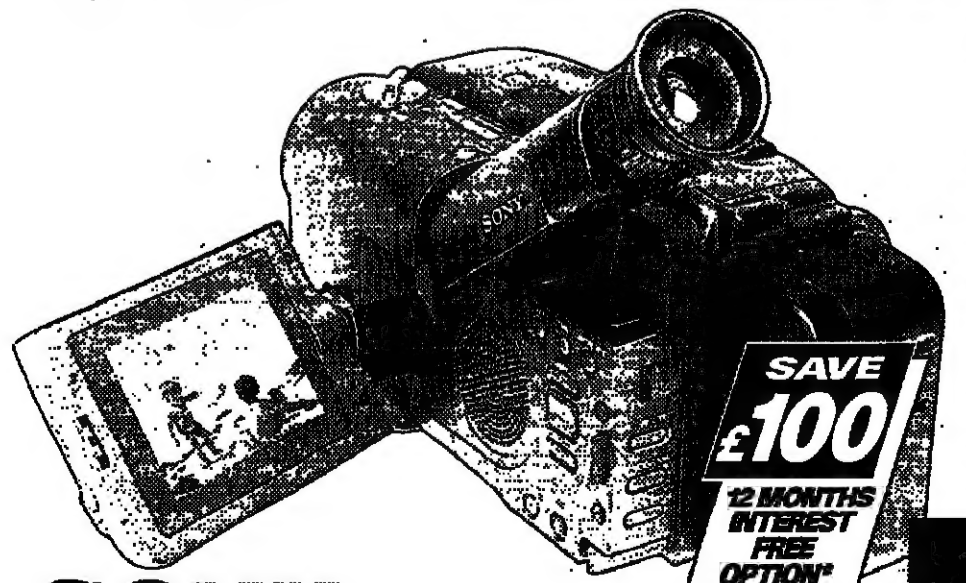
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Briton wins share of Nobel prize for Buckyball find

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE discovery of a form of carbon shaped like a football won a Nobel prize for Professor Harry Kroto of Sussex University yesterday. He shares the £700,000 chemistry prize with two American colleagues, Robert Curl and Richard Smalley of Rice University in Houston, Texas.

In 1985, the scientists discovered a form of carbon in which 60 atoms are linked together to form a sphere. Because of its resemblance to the geodesic domes of the American architect Buckminster Fuller, they called it buckminsterfullerene, today usually shortened to fullerene, or "Buckyballs".

It was an astonishing discovery. Carbon is the basis of life and its chemistry the most studied of all the elements, yet nobody had ever suspected it existed in this form.

"It's a fundamental discovery," said Salo Gronowitz, chairman of the Nobel committee for chemistry, said. "You can

practise a lot of new chemistry with these balls, and we are on the way to discovering lots of different applications."

The discovery is a classic example of scientists following their own instincts. Professor Kroto was interested in identifying the substance responsible for a mysterious signal that could be detected coming from interstellar dust. His approach was to try to create complex carbon molecules in the laboratory, measure their spectra, and match them with those coming from space. Using equipment at Rice, the three men created a stable form of carbon with 60 atoms.

In trying to work out a structure, Professor Kroto was inspired by a cardboard kit representing the stars he had once put together for his children. It was made up of pentagons and hexagons linked together.

Dr Smalley assembled such a structure and found it had 60

vertices. Only when it was finished did they realise that it was exactly like a football, which is made up of 20 white hexagons and 12 black pentagons stitched together.

"This is the greatest day of my life. It's fantastic," Professor Kroto said yesterday. "A lot of great scientists don't even dream about this."

He said the discovery might be used in many different ways, in drugs, superconductors and a whole new branch of chemistry. "Scientists should have discovered fullerenes 40 years ago but just didn't make the right calculations."

The prize for physics was awarded to Drs David Lee and Robert Richardson of Cornell University in New York and Dr Douglas Osheroff of Stanford University in California for the discovery of superfluid helium, a breakthrough in low-temperature physics.



Professor Kroto and a model of the "football" carbon, described by the Nobel committee as a fundamental discovery

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES

directory



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Top poetry awards are split three ways

By A Staff Reporter

THE Forward Poetry Prizes, Britain's most valuable annual poetry awards, went yesterday to John Fuller, Kate Clanchy and Kathleen Jamie.

The prize for the best collection went to Fuller's *Stones and Fires*, best first collection to Clanchy's *Slattern*; and the Tolman Curd Prize for best single poem to Jamie's *The Graduates*. They shared the total prize money of £16,000. The judges included Alan Jenkins, poet and deputy editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, Penelope Fitzgerald, a former Booker prizewinner, and Alastair Niven, director of literature at the Arts Council. The announcement coincides with National Poetry Day today.

To mark the day and the tenth anniversary of Child Line, the children's charity has produced an album of some of the English language's best-loved verse read by prominent actors. The CD, at £7.99, and the cassette, at £6.99, go on sale in shops today.

Leading article, page 21

Golf club lifts ban on adopted children

By Emma Wilkins

THE family of a 13-year-old boy who was banned from a golf tournament because he is adopted was celebrating yesterday after the club reversed its decision.

Audrey Briggs and her son Laurie plan to play in next year's family foursomes competition at Burhill Golf Club, near Walton-on-Thames, Surrey. "We are absolutely delighted," June Brown, Mrs Briggs's mother, said from the family home in West Kirby, Merseyside.

A club spokesman said: "The club has reconsidered the conditions of entry for next year and they have now been altered to accommodate adopted children."

Vince Dean, the club captain, said: "In view of the very strong reaction from the public, I have taken it up with the management company of Burhill Golf Club. Our priority will be to ask Audrey Briggs and her son to come back and play next year." An unnamed competitor had complained, citing the rule on adopted offspring.

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THE TIMES / DILLONS FORUM

Gorbachev: Why I did what I did

Your chance to question his policies

As President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev set in motion some of the most far-reaching events in 20th-century history. It was his vision

that led, ultimately, to the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in the East.

Times readers can hear his account of these and other vital episodes in his life at a Times/Dillons forum on Tuesday, October 29. In conversation with Timothy Garton Ash, the celebrated chronicler of the end of communism in Eastern Europe, Mr Gorbachev will discuss, through an inter-

preter, his remarkable career, and answer questions from the audience.

The forum, marking publication of Mr Gorbachev's *Memoirs* (Doubleday, £25), will be held at Westminster Central Hall, London SW1, at 7.30pm.

Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50), which include £3 off the price of Mr Gorbachev's book, are available by phoning 0171-467 1613, by faxing the coupon below to 0171-467 1690, or by sending the coupon, with your remittance, to Dillons, 82 Gower Street, London WC1E 6EQ, where tickets can also be bought.



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Election campaign thwarts plans for new laws

By Jill Sherman
Chief Political Correspondent

LEGISLATION for national identity cards and plans to help the elderly with nursing-home fees have been scrapped for this Parliament.

John Major has decided to strip the legislative programme for the next six months of contentious or costly new laws. This month's Queen's Speech will be confined instead to a handful of populist Bills that will add little to public spending and should easily get through the Commons in six months.

Tony Newton, the Leader of the Commons, has been worried that a busy legislative session would keep Tory MPs at Westminster when they should be campaigning for the general election. He also argues that there would not be enough legislative time to get through more than about four or five main Bills. These are likely to include plans by Peter Lilley to combat benefit fraud, Michael Howard's proposals for tougher sentences and Gillian Shephard's plans to extend selection in grant-maintained schools and to toughen discipline in schools.

Among those that may now be dropped are a Bill to reform primary healthcare so that GPs do more minor operations, and Mr Howard's Bill to provide for a crime squad to tackle organised crime.

Plans to privatise Channel 4 may also not reach the statute book before the general election and a proposed Bill on competition is still in the balance. Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, confirmed yesterday that new laws on strikes would not be introduced this autumn.

A Bill on tightening gun control is likely to go ahead after publication of the Cullen inquiry.

Mr Howard was to have introduced four Bills this autumn but party sources confirmed yesterday that the planned Bill on identity cards will not go ahead because the legislation is too complex. He had hoped to bring in a voluntary card based on the photocard driving licence which will come into use next year.

A Bill to help elderly people to pay their nursing-home fees is also likely to be scrapped until after the general election on the ground of cost and because the legislation is too complicated. Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, published a paper earlier this year with details of a partnership plan between the Government and the insurance industry.

Unions face writs from public over 'damaging' strikes

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

VICTIMS of strikes in monopoly public services such as railways, hospitals and schools, will be able to sue unions for damages under plans announced yesterday. Ministers hope that the reforms, unveiled by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, will act as a powerful deterrent to the unions.

"The unions could face bankruptcy. They will have to think very hard before they order the next strike on the London Underground because they could be sued for thousands of pounds of damages," one senior Tory said last night. He added: "The point is, we hope that this move will deter the strike in the first place."

Mr Lang, in his conference speech, said: "Trade unions will have to answer to the public when they call damaging strikes in public services."

There would be a new concept, "proportionality", at the heart of the legislation. "If a strike's effects are disproportionately damaging to the public then the union which organises the strike will risk losing its immunity and be sued for damages."

Legislation will not be prepared before the end of the Parliament. The proposals will form a cornerstone of the Tory election manifesto. Officials will have to establish

what is disproportionate: whether people will be able to sue if trains are delayed because of industrial action or only if no trains run at all. They want to avoid millions of rail commuters issuing writs every time there is disruption.

The proposals, which delighted Tory activists at Bournemouth, will pose a dilemma for Tony Blair. If the Labour leader opposes them, the Tories will brand him the trade unionists' poodle.

Last night, the unions promised to fight the plan. Alan Johnson, general secretary of the Union of Communication Workers, which represents postal workers, said: "Demonising workers in essential services is not an attempt to address industrial relation problems. It is merely to engage in that famous Tory sport of union bashing."

A senior Tory said: "This goes one step further than the Thatcher reforms which outlawed the flying picket and closed shop. This is an extension of one of Margaret Thatcher's biggest successes."

Mr Lang told the conference: "I am determined to ensure that if, in future, trade unions recklessly overstep the limits of legitimate protest by exploiting monopoly power, they will face the consequences of their actions. We have made unions account-

able to their members. I will now act to make them accountable to the public."

Mr Lang said many people had forgotten the winter of discontent, flying pickets and the closed shop. "But this summer we had a reprise, like a bad dream, of those old, ugly attitudes. It's in the few remaining monopolies in the public sector that the virus survives."

"We saw it in the Royal Mail and in the London Underground and British Rail. It was the public who suffered, held to ransom, treated with contempt. The unions used them for their own narrow interests."

Opening the trade and industry debate, Simon Milton, the prospective parliamentary candidate for Leicester East, attacked Labour's pledge that small businesses would be safe under a Blair government. "That's a bit like Madame Vassio saying, 'your secret will be safe with me'."

He pressed the Government to legislate after a bad summer for strikes. He said: "We cannot stay competitive if workers are prevented from travelling to their jobs by rail unions who co-ordinate their one-day strikes to cause maximum chaos for the rest of us. We cannot stay competitive if our companies cannot post orders or invoices."



Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, taking a leisurely approach to preparations for his speech today

Agencies to help jobless lone parents

By Jill Sherman

PRIVATE job agencies are to be given financial incentives to find work for up to 100,000 single mothers as part of a package announced by Peter Lilley yesterday.

In his conference speech, which included new laws to combat fraud, the Social Security Secretary said that £20 million would be invested in the *Parent Plus* scheme to encourage single mothers to get work.

Mr Lilley mixed the news of his proposals with a muted swipe at Brussels, a plea for unity and some well-honed jokes. But his decision to cut out his

rabble-raising anti-European rhetoric of previous years earned him a less enthusiastic reception than usual.

Twelve pilot schemes modelled on the American system *Gain* are to be set up next year. In four areas private firms will be invited to tender for schemes. In the eight other areas single parents will be offered help from a benefit agency or employment service caseworker. The caseworker will advise on CVs, how to dress, and how to approach interviews. In four other pilot schemes parents will be given help with child care costs while they look for work.

Officials indicated that the involvement of the private sector marked a trend that

could be extended much more widely. Mr Lilley also announced that a Bill would be included in the Queen's Speech to combat benefit fraud, under which the Social Security Department will be able to check Inland Revenue records against benefit agency records.

Mr Lilley said that he intended to set up a fraud inspectorate to investigate councils that were not taking housing benefit fraud seriously, and force them to take action.

In addition legislation will be introduced to reform the compensation recovery scheme, to allow accident victims to keep all of any damages awarded for pain and suffering.

French porn TV to be switched off

By Arthur Leathley and Valerie Elliott

VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY will today announce plans to ban a satellite pornography channel as the Government intensifies its campaign to reduce obscenity on television.

"The National Heritage Secretary will tell the Tory conference that the Government will bar the sale of 'smart cards' that allow viewers access to the *Rendezvous* channel broadcast from France."



Bottomley: sale ban on satellite "smart cards"

About 20,000 viewers have already bought an annual subscription to the channel but today's announcement will lead to it losing its British audience within a year. A separate ban on British firms advertising on the channel is aimed at cutting off the company's financial lifeline.

Ministers have faced legal difficulties in preventing overseas companies transmitting pornographic programmes to Britain, but John Major indicated yesterday that he wants tougher action to reduce obscenity. Today's announcement is to be followed by further measures to deter foreign companies broadcasting pornography here.

Mrs Bottomley will also announce a drive to persuade employers to release staff to work with voluntary groups in the community.

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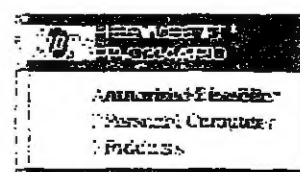
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Former Ulster officer claims he was victim of dirty tricks when he threatened to expose MI5 secrets

'SAS man' cleared of killing after 16-year campaign

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A SIXTEEN-YEAR campaign to clear his name by a man claiming to have been an SAS officer ended in victory yesterday when his conviction for manslaughter was quashed by the Lord Chief Justice.

Colin Wallace, 53, has consistently claimed that he was the victim of a dirty tricks campaign by MI5 to stop him from making allegations about security service operations in Northern Ireland.

In a 26-page judgment read in the Court of Appeal by Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Mr Wallace's conviction for killing his friend Jonathan Lewis in 1980 was dismissed as unsafe. His lawyers said later that he would pursue a claim for compensation but Ann Curran, QC, for the Crown, announced that the prosecution would seek a retrial.

Although officially employed as a senior army information officer at Lisburn in Ulster before being dismissed in 1975, Mr Wallace claims that he once worked as an intelligence officer with the job of spreading confusion among terrorists.

He maintains that he be-

came involved with MI5 officers in operation Clockwork Orange, which was allegedly aimed at removing Harold Wilson from office as Prime Minister. Mr Wallace said he became the target of covert operations to discredit him because of his threat to expose undercover work, forgery and homosexual blackmail of public figures in Ulster by British intelligence.

He was dismissed for allegedly leaking a restricted document to a journalist but in 1990 received compensation of

£30,000 after an inquiry by David Calcutt, QC, into the Defence Ministry's handling of his dismissal.

He was released from prison in 1986 after serving more than six years of a ten-year sentence imposed at Lewes Crown Court for the manslaughter of Mr Lewis, 29, an antique dealer.

At the time of the killing, Mr Wallace was working for Arun District Council, Sussex, as an information officer, assisted by Mr Lewis's wife, Jane. They formed "a relationship which was amorous but not adulterous", the judge said.

Mr Wallace, a married man now working as a management consultant, said outside court that he believed Mr Lewis was killed by criminal members of the antiquities trade in Brighton but that police had suppressed the evidence. He called for a police investigation into events surrounding the killing, including the handling of evidence.



Jane Lewis formed an "amorous relationship"

Arun, where he drowned. Dr Iain West, a Home Office pathologist, had told the jury that the victim had "probably been hit by a karate blow" to the nose. But at the appeal court hearing in July, two other pathologists said that a powerful blow would have caused damage to nasal bones, bleeding, swelling and bruising. There was no evidence of this.

Professor Keith Mant, whose report was not produced at the original trial, concluded that Mr Lewis must have been dumped in the river shortly after the blow. The Crown had said there was a two-hour gap between the blow and the drowning. Mr Wallace said the allegation of a karate blow had been manufactured to link the killing to his army background.

Lord Bingham, giving the appeal judges' ruling, said: "Had the case as it now appears been put before the court in February 1982 [when an application for leave to

appeal against conviction was dismissed] we have no doubt that leave would have been granted, the appeal allowed and a new trial ordered."

Lord Bingham said that before the trial it had been agreed between the Crown and the defence that Mr Wallace's SAS history should not be given to the jury. But newspapers published pictures of Mr Wallace in uniform. He told the court that he had not been trained in unarmed combat, but the jury



Colin Wallace outside the Court of Appeal after his victory yesterday. He will seek compensation for six years spent in prison for manslaughter

Racist banter costs newspaper £13,000

By A STAFF REPORTER

A WOMAN was told at a job interview with a local newspaper that being called a "black bastard" was typical office banter. Claudia Baptiste, 28, who is black, applied for two jobs in advertising sales at the *Telegraph* and *Argus* in Bradford but was not appointed, despite being described as an excellent candidate.

An industrial tribunal in Leeds awarded her £13,000 after ruling that she had been the victim of racist remarks. The tribunal was told that Miss Baptiste, of Bradford, was told at one interview that it was essential in the job to have a sense of humour. Jane Holt, the advertising manager, told her that she had called a member of staff a "black bastard" and he had called her a "white honky".

Miss Baptiste will also receive a written apology from the newspaper, which has agreed to bring in new guidelines on race discrimination and employment procedures, and to ensure that staff have

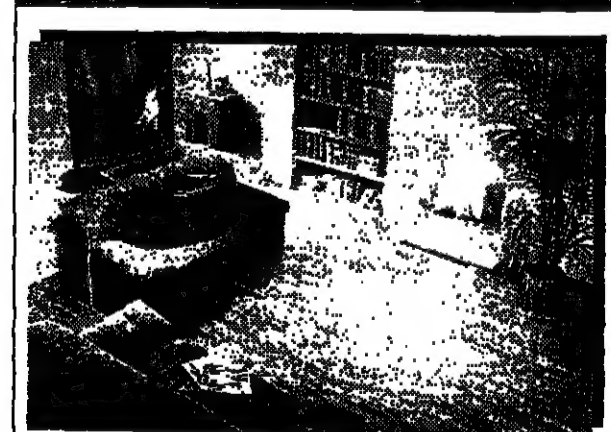
extra training. After the decision, Miss Baptiste said she was pleased that an agreement had been reached, but added that money was no compensation.

"The written apology is far more important to me and the fact that I can finally get on with my life," she said. "I want to tell anyone who has suffered from race discrimination to come forward. No one should have to accept it."

Courtney Hey, of the Northern Complainant Aid Fund, said that the case should never have gone to a tribunal. "It was clear to the newspaper from a very early stage that they had committed unlawful discrimination. For them to try to defend making racial statements to Miss Baptiste was unacceptable."

Tim Blott, managing director of Bradford and District Newspapers, said that the manager concerned had been disciplined. "We have an equal opportunities policy and don't condone discrimination in any shape or form."

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Islanders on Espiritu Santo, where a gene can protect against death from malaria

Pacific islanders' genes hold key to better malaria vaccine

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

A DISCOVERY made by British scientists on an island in the Pacific Ocean could lead to a new approach for vaccinating against malaria.

A team from the Institute of Molecular Medicine at Oxford has shown why children who carry a particular gene are protected against dying from malaria. The conclusion is that the gene makes the children more susceptible to a minor form of the disease, and that that may help to protect them against the more serious variety.

Dr Tom Williams and his wife, Dr Kathryn Maitland, spent three years on the island of Espiritu Santo, in Vanuatu, gathering the data. Together with colleagues they report today in *Nature* that children who carry the gene for a blood abnormality are much more likely to get malaria, but less likely to die of it.

The gene is the one responsible for a form of anaemia called alpha thalassaemia. There has long been evidence that people carrying the gene are less likely to contract malaria and that is believed to be why the thalassaemia gene

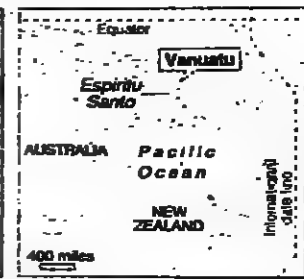


Dr Kathryn Maitland and Dr Tom Williams spent three years on Espiritu Santo

has survived in malaria-prone populations.

Dr Williams said he was surprised to find that the version of the gene they studied did not appear to protect at all. Children carrying two copies of it were more, not less, likely to get malaria. Evidence from other countries that the gene protects

against malaria is strong. There were two ways of explaining the results, he said. One was that contracting malaria when young improved the chances of surviving it later; the other was that getting the milder form, called *Plasmodium vivax*, reduced the severity of subsequent attacks of the lethal form, *Plasmodium falciparum*.



Dr Williams said: "The second of these is the more exciting, because it suggests that a new vaccine for malaria might be based on *Plasmodium vivax*. It has always been argued that *vivax* doesn't protect against *falciparum*, but we speculate that it may make the disease less dangerous."

Teacher died after Burma holiday

A CORONER in Hong Kong recorded a verdict of death by natural causes yesterday on a British teacher who died from malaria in February.

Simon Davies, 34, gave a positive test for malaria at one hospital, but the finding was not passed to the hospital to

which he was later transferred. When Mr Davies eventually received treatment for a fast-spreading form of the disease it was too late, the coroner was told.

Mr Davies, who taught English at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, had suffered

flu-like symptoms two weeks after a holiday in Burma. On his return he visited Queen Mary Hospital in Hong Kong, but was sent home with paracetamol. He was later flown to another hospital and then transferred to a third, where he died on February 10.

Smoking 'increases risk of blindness'

By JEREMY LAURANCE

SMOKING can cause blindness, scientists have found. They discovered that smokers face an increased risk of macular degeneration, a condition in which the cell layer behind the retina begins to rot. Those who smoke more than 20 cigarettes a day have twice the risk of developing the condition, which is the commonest cause of blindness in the elderly.

A study of 32,000 nurses aged between 50 and 59 in 1980, by a team from the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Boston, found that over the following 12 years those who smoked more than 25 cigarettes a day had almost 2½ times the risk of developing macular degeneration.

Giving up smoking, even 15 years earlier, did not reduce the risk. A second study of 21,000 male doctors conducted at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, and Harvard Medical School reported similar findings.

The studies are reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Stores lose fight over 'superbean' labelling

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

SUPERMARKETS have lost their fight to be able to warn customers which foods are made from genetically altered soya bean products. The retailers conceded defeat yesterday in a year-long battle to have the foods, which will be on the shelves from next month, clearly labelled to give consumers a choice.

The move could open the floodgates to a string of genetically altered crops, including maize, sugar beet, wheat and potatoes. Soya can be found in 60 per cent of supermarket food products, and thousands of tonnes of the herbicide-resistant strain are currently being processed into everything from chocolate to mayonnaise, dressings, cooking oils, pasta, breakfast cereals, sausages, milk drinks, ready meals and desserts.

Sainsbury's, one of the companies that has been pressing for clear labelling, confirmed yesterday that consumers will have no idea whether the ready meal or baby food they buy contains the "superbeans". "We have had to concede. There will be no labelling. We are very disappointed," a spokesman said. Most of the big chains said yesterday that they would be putting leaflets into stores to explain to their customers what was happening.

The beans, developed by the American company Monsanto, have been altered by use of a gene from a bacteria to be resistant to its herbicides, which are made from glyphosate. The company, whose gene-altered crop is being harvested this month, claims it is impossible to segregate the new beans from natural ones.

Martin Henderson of the Co-operative chain, which refused to stock a paste made from genetically altered tomatoes, said that it was powerless to control the arrival of the superbeans in the food chain. "When you have literally hundreds of own-brand products made from soya and manufactured in Britain, Europe and the world, then knowing where the beans come from is impossible. Everyone is in the same boat."

About 2 per cent of this year's 66 million tonne American crop, where beans for British foods come from, is from gene-altered seeds. The percentage will increase in coming years. Retailers said that they would step up pressure on Monsanto to segregate beans from next year.

Julie Sheppard, of Genetic Forum, a group that monitors developments in genetically altered food, said yesterday that the arrival of the beans, unlabelled, in British food flew in the face of consumer wishes. "An opinion poll by the Food and Drink Federation last year found that 93 per cent of consumers wanted any food which contains genetically engineered ingredients to be clearly labelled," she said.

Monsanto has been given European Union approval to ship the beans to Britain and the Continent. Ministry of Agriculture scientists claim that processing leaves no trace of the bacterial gene or its byproducts. Critics claim the beans are being rushed into products before all safety concerns have been properly resolved and are worried that other gene-altered crops will find their way into foods unlabelled.

Janet Nunn, director of food and drink at the British Retail Consortium, said that unless segregation of the crop could be guaranteed, retailers should develop new sources of conventional soya beans or use soya alternatives.

Love's labours exact the highest price

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

COURTING fruit flies just don't know when to stop. The constant beating of wings as they make their courtship song wears them out and they die young.

Biologists have known for a while that sex cuts life expectancy in fruit flies. But the latest research shows that it is not so much the sex as the effort to get it that does the damage.

Dr Linda Partridge, of University College London, and Dr Rudiger Cordts, of Ruhr University, have teased out this fact in an ingenious experiment reported in *New Scientist*. They used mutant males, unable to produce sperm, and females with damaged reproductive tracts, which meant they could not mate. They compared their

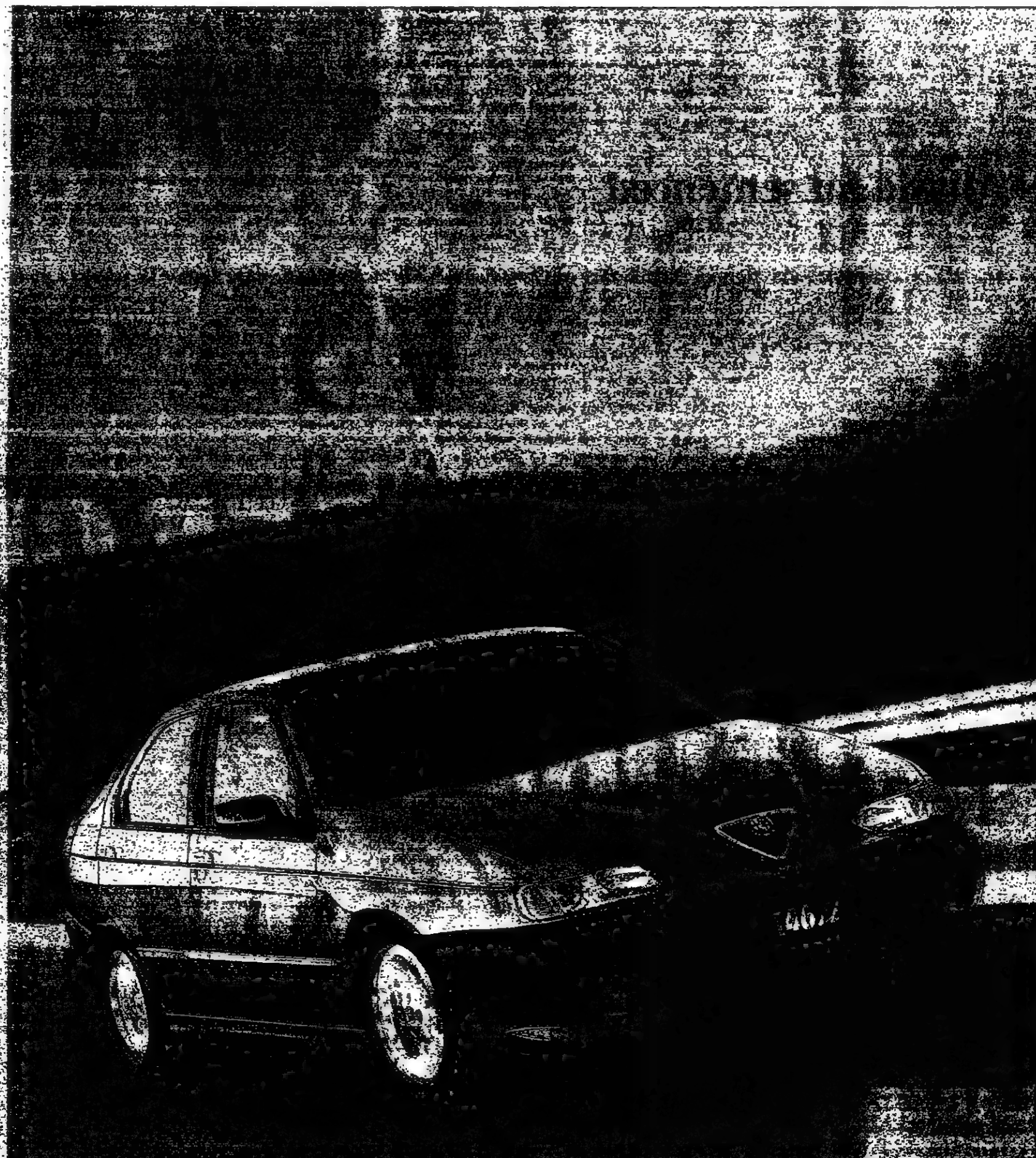


The amorous fruit fly

behaviour and lifespan with ordinary males and females.

At best, the life of a fruit fly is little more than a month. Males kept in vials with other males, who made no attempt to mate, lived the longest. But all the males who courted females died more than a week earlier.

It made no difference whether they had actually succeeded in mating: flies who had had sex lived just as long as those who had rushed around wooing females that were unable to mate.



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War fears grow as South Koreans are found murdered

FROM DAVID WATTS IN SEOUL

TENSIONS on the Korean peninsula have risen to the highest level since the end of the Korean War after three peasants were murdered in the South in an area where three North Koreans are on the run.

The Government has been talking of severe retaliation against the North ever since a North Korean hit-squad came ashore from a broken-down submarine last month.

Only three from the original team remain free. Twenty two were killed — 11 by their commanders — and one officer is in captivity. A taxi-driver who spotted the submarine has been given a free trip to the United States by an admirer.

The pressure on President Kim Young Sam is now likely to become almost irresistible after two men and an elderly woman were murdered while out picking mushrooms. The men were shot with M16s, which the North Korean fugitives are known to have, and the woman was bludgeoned to death.

The incident is a fresh humiliation for the Government, which had told the public that the North Koreans had either fled across the border to the North or would die of exposure. South Koreans have been outraged that while the North was holding a seminar on foreign investment and appealing to the world for rice to feed its starving peasants, a senior North Korean general was entertaining the hit-squad to a banquet before they set off to kill the South Korean leader at a national sports day in the east coast area where the team landed.

Maps of the area, South Korean army uniforms, M16 rifles and hand grenades were found on board the North Korean submarine.

President Kim has rallied the opposition and given a warning that any incident might lead to a "limited war" on the peninsula.

He has threatened to withdraw from a key programme — which has kept the lid on a cauldron of hatred for several years — to build a light-water nuclear reactor in North Korea so that the most hard-line communist Government in the world will not develop nuclear weapons and turn a crisis into a regional disaster.

A clear South Korean-American rift is obvious from the amount of publicity being given by the Kim Government to the arrest of a man in the United States who was allegedly spying for Seoul against Washington.

President Clinton now faces the possibility that one of his key foreign policy successes is threatened in the run-up to next month's presidential election.

The White House is disturbed at the speedy deterioration of the situation and is sending Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary of State, to try to cool South Korean heads. He is due in Seoul on Thursday.

The submarine mission may have been prompted by the increasing desperation of Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader. The Times has learnt that since an accident — when he apparently crashed one of his sports cars — the "Dear Leader" has been unable to speak properly as a result of brain damage.

Since the accident he has not made a public speech, and a senior South Korean source says the North Korean leader has only once been heard to utter a phrase. At a military parade he said: "Let's bring glory to the North Korean armed forces".

Most probably because of his speech handicap, he has never been head of state or of the workers' party, despite the fact that it is three years since his father, Kim Il Sung, died.

Mr Wang could not be reached at home in the southern city of Canton and sources said he did not return there on Tuesday, raising the possibility that he had also been detained.

Chinese police officers have the power, at their own discretion, to send people to what is called "re-education through labour".

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Dragon Gate Bridge, 360ft above the Daning river, will skim the surface of the reservoir when the valley is flooded

Weary peasants plan dam escape

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN WUSHAN, SICHUAN

ALONG the Daning river, which joins the mighty Yangtze at this town of "Witch Mountain" — named after a rock formation resembling a sorcerer — peasants work in fields of black fertile earth. But in just a few years, they will have to move up to the steep mountain ridges, and terrace it in back-breaking labour to escape the waters of a reservoir.

"Some of them are not too happy about that," said Zhang Qing, 27, as our motorised sampan passed beneath Dragon Gate Bridge, which stood almost 360ft above us. The water level of the 394-mile-long reservoir — which will form behind the mammoth Three Gorges Dam, now under construction downstream on the Yangtze — will reach the road surface of the bridge, she explained.

Most of the little "three gorges", which are miniature versions of the famed Three Gorges on the Yangtze, will be flooded in a few years to provide irrigation and hydro-electric power. The mandarin ducks will probably survive.

By 2003, Wushan, a surprisingly rakish town at the confluence of the Daning and Yangtze with its population of 90,000 in noisy, tree-lined streets, and its myriad markets and karaoke bars, will be entirely under the muddy, polluted reservoir waters.

Li Peng, the Prime Minister, has promised that everything will be done to preserve relics and to excavate important sites, but "cash shortfall" is a refrain that is heard all along the Yangtze.

Archaeologists say that they do not have enough funds to dig much in the "little" gorges, where a race called the Ba once lived and whose coffins were placed on pegs on cliffs



The mammoth Three Gorges Dam under construction

or on narrow shelves. One is still visible hundreds of feet up — at least it will not be disturbed. Elsewhere, botanists are scouring the Yangtze valley for herb species that could disappear for ever.

In doomed Wushan, a crowd of young schoolgirls brush the streets in a display of civic pride that will soon make no difference. On the hills above Wushan, bulldozers and heavy lorries kick up dust as work progresses on private blocks of flats. They are quite attractive, which is more than can be said for those that have already been built above Wanxian, a large city further upstream, where 800,000 people are to be moved.

In truth, the loss of towns such as Wanxian and Wushan is not a catastrophe, as most buildings are ugly concrete blocks built during the architecturally dull Maoist period of the 1950s. Still, this whole area is important in Chinese history, site of the kingdoms of Shu and Wu during the period romanticised in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, a classic as important in Chinese culture as the *Iliad* is in the West.

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Chinese dissident sentenced

BY JAMES PRINGLE

A PROMINENT Chinese dissident, Liu Xiaobo, was ordered to serve three years in a labour camp just hours after the police detained him at his home on Tuesday, his relatives said yesterday. They added that no reason had been given by the authorities for his detention.

Mr Liu, who is in his thirties, is an author, critic and former university lecturer. He

came to prominence during the pro-democracy protests of 1989 and he played a leading role in the Tiananmen demonstrations which were bloodily suppressed. For that, Mr Liu spent a year and a half in detention.

Last month, Mr Liu and another dissident, Wang Xizhe, wrote an open letter calling for freedom of speech in the press in China. It also criticised President Jiang Zemin and attacked govern-

ment policies in Tibet. Mr Liu's detention was almost certainly connected with this.

Mr Wang could not be reached at home in the southern city of Canton and sources said he did not return there on Tuesday, raising the possibility that he had also been detained.

Chinese police officers have the power, at their own discretion, to send people to what is called "re-education through labour".

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WORLD SUMMARY

34 killed in Algeria ambush

Paris: Muslim fundamentalists killed 34 people in an Algerian town, including 20 bus passengers who had their throats cut, Algerian newspapers reported yesterday.

"Passengers of a bus were told [by terrorists] to get out for identity checks which turned into a nightmare. One by one their throats were coldly slit," *Liberté* said. The ambush, in the south of the Saharan desert town of Laghouat, was one of the bloodiest reported in nearly five years of violence. (Reuters)

Pope stepping back to health

Rome: The Pope was making a smooth recovery from his appendix operation yesterday, walking around and chatting with doctors, who said a definitive biopsy had shown that he did not have a tumour. "He spoke with us and he strolled around the corridors of his suite," said Professor Luigi Ortona, a senior member of the Pope's medical team. (Reuters)

Rabbits freed to spread disease

Sydney: The Australian Government has officially released rabbits in New South Wales infected with the deadly rabbit calicivirus disease, hoping it will spread and kill most of the estimated 200 million rabbits ravaging the countryside. The virus accidentally escaped from an island laboratory last year. (AFP)

Liberians ask for end to aid

Monrovia: Starving people in Liberia are asking to be spared more aid because it attracts guerrilla factions, Tasema Nagash, a UN humanitarian co-ordinator, said. In the latest atrocity, 25 people were killed, mostly women and children. (AFP)

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Taleban conquest falters as Afghan factions fight back

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN JABAL OS-SIRAJ

THE Taleban Islamic militia has been halted in its stunning sweep through Afghanistan. The fighters, overstretched and outmanoeuvred, appeared yesterday to have suspended their siege of former government forces in the Panjshir Valley.

The Islamic warriors have regrouped in the small town of Jabal os-Siraj, which straddles the Salang Highway a few miles from the mouth of the Panjshir. This is one of the biggest reverses for Taleban in its two-year march through the country, three-quarters of which it controls. Its hopes of swiftly capturing northern Afghanistan seem suddenly to have collapsed.

Additional tanks, artillery and men were shifted to Jabal os-Siraj on Tuesday and yesterday. This is Taleban's principal supply base for the siege of Panjshir as well as for forces guarding the Salang Highway against the troops of General

Rashid Dostum, the Uzbek warlord of the north, who controls the vital Salang Tunnel. He seems to have allied himself with the ousted Government against the invaders. That would make a formidable partnership.

Jabal os-Siraj, a few miles south of the tunnel, could probably not survive for long against a determined joint operation by General Dostum and General Ahmed Shah Masood, the defence chief of the ousted Government. The extent of their alliance is not yet clear. General Dostum has said there is no pact and that he remains neutral. This seems improbable.

He is continuing talks in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif with Burhanuddin Rabbani, the former President. General Dostum has not ruled out holding talks with Taleban if it halts its military offensive. The former communist commander is a military oppo-

unist who has changed sides several times in Afghanistan's 17 years of armed conflict. He has huge amounts of hardware, including fighter aircraft. In Afghan terms he is an Islamic moderate: some of his men even drink.

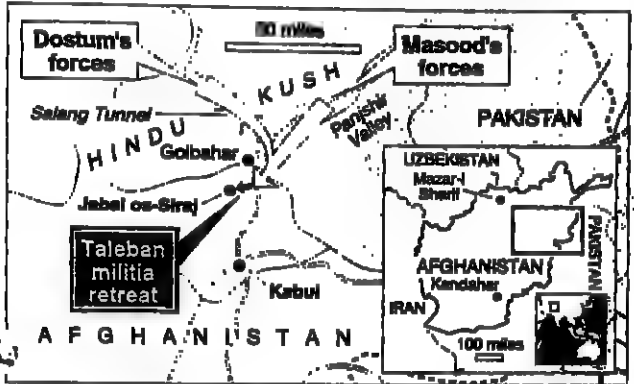
General Masood has some old Russian MiG21s, and he escaped to the Panjshir two weeks ago with most of his tanks and artillery.

General Dostum participated, or at least co-operated, in an assault on Taleban forces south of the Salang Tunnel two days ago. Scores of Taleban fighters died in the confrontation and Taleban also lost 200 to 300 men in its assault on the Panjshir.

The mood of Taleban soldiers guarding the approaches to Jabal os-Siraj yesterday was sombre. There was no sound of shelling at the Panjshir, apparently confirming reports that the assault has stopped.

Afghanistan looks set for prolonged uncertainty as it enters a new phase of war. Taleban's military strategists in the southern city of Kandahar are doubtless stunned by the reverse in their fortunes. In Kabul, its religious leaders are equally as surprised by mounting international hostility to its harsh theocracy.

□ **Kabul:** An International Red Cross official was severely beaten and held for 13 hours after being detained by Taleban militia in Kabul. The organisation has complained to the Government. (AFP)



Binyamin Netanyahu with his wife, Sara, whose former husband said he was alarmed to see her reviewing state papers

Marriage book threatens Netanyahu

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S accident-prone First Lady was at the centre of a new scandal yesterday after disclosures that her former husband was about to publish an unflattering memoir of their six-year marriage.

The Israeli press reported that aides to Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, had failed to prevent publication of intimate disclosures about his third wife, Sara, by the man she married in 1981. The impending publication of the book by Doron Neuberger, a kibbutz teacher whose marriage ended in divorce, cast a new political shadow over Mr Netanyahu as a time when he is facing strong pressure at home and abroad over his handling of the recent security crisis with the Palestinians.

It came as Mrs Netanyahu, 37, was still struggling to shake off the memory of an earlier scandal over her alleged tyranny of two domestic servants and her alleged obsession with cleanliness.

Israel's tabloid press carried stories yesterday alleging that \$1 million (£640,000) had been demanded unsuccessfully by Mr Neuberger from the Prime Minister's office to suppress the book.

Yediot Aharonot, the Tel Aviv daily newspaper, reported under the headline "The Life of Sara" that Mr Neuberger decided "to publish the book after he saw his wife reviewing secret state documents alongside her present husband. The photographs led Mr Neuberger to conclude that Mrs Netanyahu was involved in decision-making, which frightened him."

□ Sharon pleads: Ariel Sharon, Israel's hawkish former Defence Minister, surprised Israelis and Arabs by saying in a radio broadcast yesterday that concessions were now necessary in order to make peace in the region.

Cities of Middle East hit by quake

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE eastern Mediterranean was rocked by powerful tremors yesterday, with residents of Nicosia, Cairo, Tel Aviv, Beirut and other main cities running into the streets in panic and abandoning their cars with the motors running.

A woman was killed when her three-storey home collapsed as a result of the quake 50 miles north of the Egyptian capital, news agencies reported. Cyprus police said a 75-year-old man died of a heart attack as he and other patients were escorted downstairs at Limassol General Hospital during the tremor.

The earthquake, which lasted 20 minutes, registered 6.5 on the Richter scale, shaking tall buildings in cities around the Mediterranean rim. An Egyptian seismologist at Helwan Observatory said the epicentre appeared to be in the Gulf of Aqaba, but the US Geological Survey said that the main tremors were off the western coastal resort of Paphos in Cyprus.

The shocks were most strongly felt on the island in that town and in Limassol in the south. One man in Nicosia said the ground "was shaking so much I could hardly keep upright". Landslides in the mountains near Paphos blocked roads.

Residents of Beirut said there had been damage to shaky buildings left crumbling and unrepaired after the civil war. The quake was also felt in the southern Lebanese port cities of Tyre and Sidon, the northern city of Tripoli and the eastern cities of Baalbek and Zahle.

The tremor was also felt in Israel, Syria and Turkey. Witnesses in Tel Aviv said high-rise buildings in the centre had swayed as the ground shook, and some buildings had been evacuated. The tremors were also felt by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, where the more modest one and two-storey flat-roofed houses are less susceptible.

An earthquake in the region last November caused several deaths when a hotel in the Sinai peninsula collapsed. The most severe recent earthquake was in 1992, when 400 people died in Cairo.

Turks kill 250 to thwart Kurdish offensive

FROM ANDREW FINKEL IN ISTANBUL

TURKISH security officials say they may have thwarted a late autumn offensive by Kurdish militants in the southeast of the country. Unconfirmed reports speak of more than 250 members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) being killed in nearly a week of intensive fighting.

Western analysts said Turkish troops drove PKK activists into narrower and narrower concentric circles around Sivras and Hakkari. Reports also refer to "hot pursuit" operations over the Turkish border into northern Iraq and air attacks against PKK bases deep into Iraqi territory. The bloodiest confrontation appears to have occurred in the mountains above Uludere, on the Iraqi border, where 118 PKK died. A total of 15 Turks are reported to have been killed and the PKK's local commander is said to be among the 43 militants killed at Sivras.

The apparent success of the Turkish Army, in heading off this latest PKK advance demonstrates a major change in tactics. Under a new Commander-in-Chief, Ismail Hakkî Karadayi, the military and the security forces are now reported to be both better co-ordinated and more aggressive. The military now operates at night and at the high altitudes which the PKK traditionally regarded as their safe haven.

While the success of the operations may have curtailed the PKK in the short term, sources close to the Turkish military also say the supply of potential recruits among the unemployed and disaffected population of the Turkish southeast is "inexhaustible".

□ **Hunger strike:** Vedat Aydemir, a Kurdish rebel prisoner, has died in hospital ten days after setting himself alight to protest at the deaths of 11 Kurdish prisoners in a southeastern jail. (Reuters)

Maid accuses envoy of rape

Shah Alam, Malaysia: A Filipina maid, 27, yesterday filed a civil suit in the Malaysian High Court alleging she had been raped by Kresimir Zaidaric, 46, the Croat Ambassador. Malaysian law provides for a jail term of up to 20 years and whipping for rape. Maria Ocampo alleges that the ambassador, who hired her on April 7, raped her four times between April 11 and August 23. (AFP)

Children die in hostel fire

Kuala Lumpur: Eleven children were burnt to death yesterday in a fire that engulfed their hostel in Sarawak, the Malaysian state on the island of Borneo.

The victims were ten boys aged between eight and 11 and a nine-year-old girl, the Bernama national news agency quoted Wan Alkap Man, a fire chief, as saying. The blaze had nearly burnt itself out by the time firefighters arrived in the remote village of Kampung Sessang. Eighteen children were sleeping in the hostel at the time of the fire. The seven survivors were being treated for burns in hospital. The dead children, most of them Muslims, could only be identified from objects on their bodies. (Reuters)

□ **Kuala Lumpur:** Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian Prime Minister, has accepted back into his party 200,000 members of the Spirit of '46, a defunct rival group, before crucial polls this week. (Reuters)

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French press riles MPs with tax perk boycott

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH journalists who face losing their long-established tax perks have hit back at politicians where it hurts them most: by threatening not to report a single word they say.

The French fourth estate traditionally enjoys a 30 per cent tax concession which Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, wants to eliminate as part of cost-cutting measures aimed at reducing the deficit in time for European monetary union (EMU). In retaliation, reporters covering the French parliament have threatened to boycott MPs who vote to raise their taxes and several local newspapers say they will simply cease to report on politicians who support the move to repeal the cherished 60-year-old benefit.

On Tuesday, the Gaullist leader of the National Assembly accused journalists of intimidation and said he would sue any reporter or editor who carried out the threat. The six main journalism unions have called for a protest strike next Tuesday, when debate on next year's budget begins, and

many local newspapers have launched Operation Invisible Man, in which local politicians supporting the change will vanish from news pages unless the Government backs down. MPs within the ruling majority are braced for another round of strikes beginning in earnest next week, but the prospect of being silenced by the media is enough to strike terror into the heart of the toughest French deputy.

"It seems an inadmissible breach of the constitution, which forbids putting pressure on parliamentarians," Michel Péricard, leader of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic party and a former television journalist, said on Tuesday. He said putting pressure on

politicians was a grave professional fault and he had a list of journalists behind the threatened boycott. Fifty-seven journalists from a Provençal newspaper promptly sent a letter asking that their names be added to the "list".

Some newspapers, in an indication that the boycott threat is serious, pointedly declined to report what M. Péricard had said and *France Soir* reported that M. Péricard had availed himself of the tax concession for 22 years without ever balking at it.

Several politicians are already beginning to waver when faced with the prospect of a press boycott. Some have tabled motions to retain the journalistic tax concession or to scale it down. Gilles de

Robien, president of the UDF, the junior partner in the ruling coalition, said yesterday that the Government should be ready to discuss the matter, but "not with a pistol pointed at the temple".

Journalists may seem unlikely candidates for state generosity, but theirs is only one of 115 professions enjoying various benefits in the fiendishly complex tax system. Other beneficiaries include models, airline pilots and healthcare workers.

Under present rules, the 25,000 journalists in France can deduct 30 per cent of earnings from their taxable income, up to a limit of Fr50,000 (£6,200).

The concession was established in 1936, when journalists often had to pay their own expenses, purchase paper and pens and buy lunch when entertaining sources. Today, the Government points out, reporters are provided with company computers and large expense accounts for entertaining — and politicians are among the main beneficiaries.

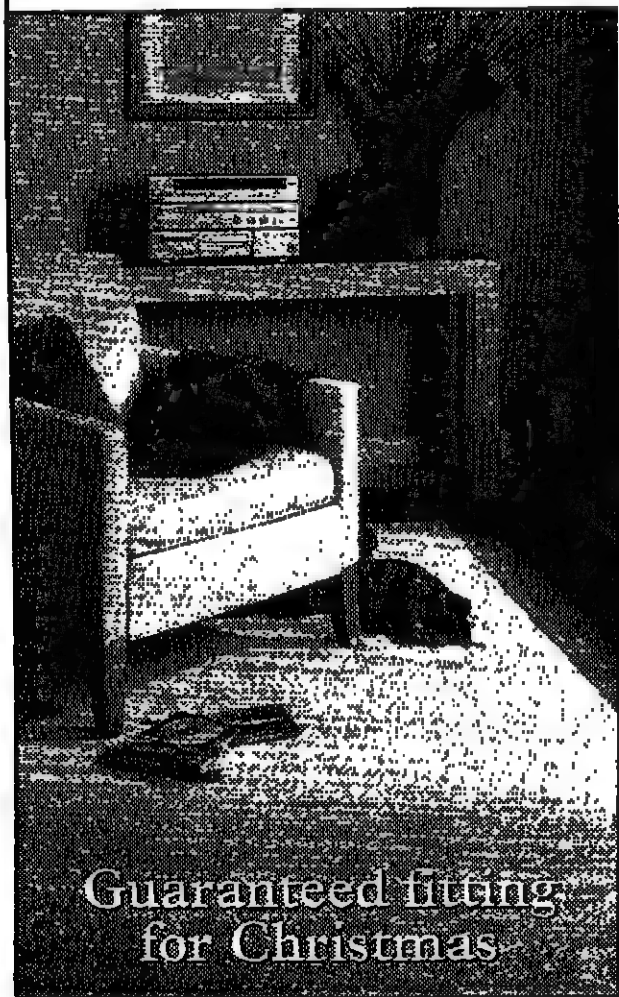
Bomb hoax drunk jailed

Bordeaux Patrick Lasserre, 37, who telephoned police when he was drunk last weekend and said he had just blown up city hall here, was jailed for a month with five

months suspended and ordered to undergo treatment for alcoholism. Prosecutors have begun an inquiry into the bombing, by a Corsican separatist group. (AFP/AP)

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Princess Caroline of Monaco wearing a turban at the Princess Grace Foundation awards in New York to cover her recent hair loss. The baldness, right, has been described by the Princess's brother, Prince Albert, as "a

skin problem, a dermatology thing — it will grow back" (Quentin Letts writes). Aides have discounted claims that she underwent cancer treatment or that the loss was caused by shock over recent family problems.

Assaults on British diplomats increase

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE world is getting more dangerous for diplomats. Attacks on British embassy officials overseas rose by 17 per cent last year, with murders, robberies, hijackings and assaults an increasing threat in capitals of the Third World and former Soviet republics.

There were 149 "serious incidents" involving British diplomats in 1995, and 101 incidents were recorded in the first six months of this year.

Examples from this year include a diplomat in Georgetown, Guyana, who was struck in the face with a metal pole by a mentally ill man; an incident in Dhaka, Bangladesh, when rocks were thrown at a passing British High Commission vehicle; in Maseru, Lesotho, a member of staff, his wife and friends were held at gunpoint and robbed while attending a bible class in another expatriate's home; and in a Guatemala City park a staff member was held up and robbed by two men armed with a gun and wielding machetes.

One senior Foreign Office official told *Foreign Service*, a London-based magazine widely read by diplomats: "Many posts that were havens ten to 15 years ago are now hell holes, and people are not as quick to volunteer for them as they used to be."

Africa is the most dangerous continent, with 63 per cent of all the crimes recorded. The riskiest countries for British diplomats were Bulgaria and Bangladesh, each with 18 serious incidents, followed by Russia with eight, Ethiopia and Hungary with seven, Turkey and Ukraine with six, and Kenya with five.

Plague of rats brings terror to Paris streets

BY BEN MACINTYRE

THE sealing of litter bins in Paris after last year's terrorist bombings has led to an explosion in the rat population, which has thrived on the edible rubbish left strewn across the streets of the capital.

The furred rodents have grown markedly fatter and more numerous since the city closed all its 26,000 bins, according to a report in *Le Figaro* yesterday, and

although the threat from Algerian Islamic bombers has subsided, the plague of rats has revived a more traditional phobia. "We have received many complaints from Parisians and from our workers," the Paris prefecture said. There is no official estimate of the Paris population of *Rattus norvegicus*, but rat experts have pointed out that a single female can produce 60 offspring in a single year and more than 1,800 descendants in two years. Until last

year's anti-terrorist operation, code-named Vigipirate, the number of rats in Paris had been dwindling over the past two centuries, but *Le Figaro* predicted a "new and bloody episode" in the battle between rat and man as a result of the sudden population boom. The authorities are gradually reopening all the bins, but the rats can look forward to at least one more blowout when the rubbish collectors go on strike next Thursday.

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Europe 'faces rising threat from global missile stock'

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

TEN different types of ballistic missiles are now deployed in the most unstable region of the world extending from Libya to North Korea.

In the latest assessment of the growing ballistic missile threat, the International Institute for Strategic Studies showed in an annual report how the range of these systems is reaching further towards Western Europe.

Britain and other European countries are examining options for developing anti-ballistic missile defences, although it is recognised that the cost may be prohibitive. According to the institute's report on the balance of forces across the world, in the Middle East, and in Central, South and East Asia, there is a proliferation of ballistic missiles with ranges varying from 45 miles to about 1,700.

The family of ballistic missiles includes Russian-made Scud Bs in Libya, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and North Korea; Chinese-made CSS 2s in Saudi Arabia; and Jericho 1s and 2s in Israel.

The biggest ballistic missile in this family of medium and short-range weapons is the Chinese CSS 2, which has a range of about 1,700 miles and an explosive payload of 3,000kg. Pakistan and India have their own ballistic missiles. India has Prithvi missiles with a range of between 90 and 155 miles and a payload of up to 1,000kg, and Pakistan has Hatf missiles, with ranges up to 375 miles and a maximum payload of

500kg. Libya's Scud Bs have the capability of reaching Naples, the report said. "Libya continues to cause security concerns, not only within the region, but also among the Western powers whose concerns focus on the suspected development of weapons of mass destruction, in particular chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery," the report said.

Libya was constructing a special underground facility at Tarhuna, about 35 miles southeast of Tripoli, which the West suspected was to be a chemical weapons plant.

Iraq, the report said, was still restrained from developing new military capabilities because of the restrictions imposed by the United Nations Security Council. However, Baghdad had not been deterred from efforts to hide and retain what proscribed military capabilities they can.

In the Middle East and North Africa, where many of the ballistic missiles are deployed, defence spending across the region had shown a small increase in 1996, the report said. Saudi Arabia accounted for nearly a third of regional spending on defence. Israel, Iran, Egypt and Syria were also high defence spenders. Very little public information was available on Iraq. The Iranian defence budget for 1996 had increased substantially to \$3.4 billion (£2.2 billion), with arms imports coming mainly from Russia and China.

□ *The Military Balance 1996/1997*, International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Rivals say Lebed has sold out to Nato

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S security chief, General Aleksandr Lebed, faced a storm of protest from his political rivals when he returned to Moscow last night after his visit to Nato headquarters in Brussels.

Although the trip, his first to the West, was regarded by Nato officials as a resounding success, the security adviser's detractors at home were accusing him of selling out Russia, first to Chechen rebels and now to the alliance.

Viktor Vishnyakov, a parliamentarian for the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, said yesterday that General Lebed would be summoned to testify before the Duma to answer charges of weakening Russia's security. "Before he left, Lebed spoke out against eastwards Nato expansion, but when he landed in Brussels he started saying how peaceful and civilised Nato is," the right-wing deputy said.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, his party leader, was more blunt. He compared General Lebed to Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader, who he said was seduced by the West. "While his paratroop divisions are being liquidated he is exchanging hugs with Nato generals in Brussels," Mr Zhirinovskiy said.

The latest criticism comes after a torrent of invective directed towards the ambitious former paratrooper, whose naked desire to become President has earned him enemies in government circles as well as among opposition figures. Yuri Luzhkov, the powerful Mayor of Moscow, regarded as a contender for the presidency, compared General Lebed to Stalin.

Aleksandr Lebed, page 20
Leading article, page 21



Jean-Marc Connerotte, the investigating magistrate who is being forced to drop the case

Sex case prosecutors face sack

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

PUBLIC anger over Belgium's child murder scandal reached a new pitch yesterday when the country's senior prosecutor called for the judicial investigator and local prosecutor to be removed from the case for accepting a free meal from supporters of the victims' families.

Elliane Liekens, the state prosecutor, said it was with heavy heart that she felt legally obliged to advise the country's highest court to remove from the case Jean-Marc Connerotte and Michel Bourlet, the investigating magistrate and the prosecutor

of Neuchâteau. A fresh wave of indignation has swept the country over the past week since the lawyer for Marc Dutroux, the man suspected of killing four girls and kidnapping two others, called for the pair to be taken off the case on the basis that they had compromised their objectivity by attending the dinner.

Mr Connerotte and Mr Bourlet had emerged as national heroes for their aggressive pursuit of a case that has brought the Belgian justice system and the state itself into severe disrepute. The Court de Cassation, or supreme court,

is to rule on Monday, but experts said it appeared that it would be legally obliged to take them off the case.

"I regret it, but the law requires his [Mr Connerotte's] removal," Mme Liekens said.

The chief prosecutor's call was denounced yesterday by parents of the murdered children. "Four children are buried ten feet deep. Dutroux is undefendable, so they go and find legal hairs to split," said Gino Russo, the father of Melissa, one of two eight-year-olds starved to death by Mr Dutroux.

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Gould in row with staff and students

FROM JO ANDREWS IN WELLINGTON

BRYAN GOULD, the former Labour MP, has become the first university Vice-Chancellor in New Zealand's history simultaneously to face a strike by academic staff and a threat of legal action by students.

Waikato University's academic and general staff went on strike yesterday in support of a 6 per cent pay rise. At the same time, the student union threatened to sue the university for a breach of contract for failing to provide lectures.

Their action comes as the student newspaper published more details of the £80,000 renovations done to the Vice-Chancellor's house and swimming pool since Mr Gould's appointment. The strike is being held in the last week of lectures before the end-of-year exams begin and three days before a general election. The student union estimates that about 500 students missed lectures and are threatening to sue the university.

Ben King, president of the Waikato Student Union, said: "It is the last week [before exams] and students have contracted with the university to get a full set of lectures. We can take a civil action against the university or the other thing we can do is to have a mass application for reconsideration of our grades."

Mr Gould said: "I think it is very regrettable that some of our staff seem prepared to take action that jeopardises the interests of students."

Dr Raymond Richards, of the Association of University Staff, said members were disgusted that Mr Gould refused to negotiate academic salaries himself and had left it to the university's chief negotiator. He added: "There is increasing concern about all these horror stories about spending on his house and pool... if the university has got the money for that, it should have got the money to pay us."



Gould: £80,000 spent on house and pool

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Food for thought

Clinton's morality attacked in Dole change of tactics

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

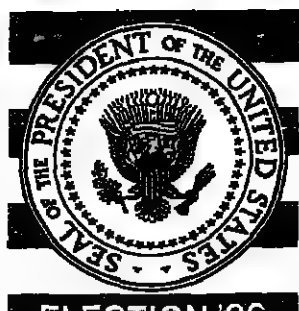
THE American presidential campaign is finally heating up. As Al Gore and Jack Kemp prepared for last night's vice-presidential debate, Bob Dole unleashed his first really harsh attacks on Bill Clinton's character and morals.

The struggling Republican candidate assailed the President as a man whose "word's no good". He unveiled an advertisement blaming Mr Clinton for the nation's "moral crisis" and accused him of "playing around" as millions of young Americans turned to drugs or tobacco.

Asked by an interviewer whether Mr Clinton had the ethics and morals to be President, Mr Dole replied that it was a "very close question" and one that troubled him.

"I don't admire Bill Clinton, no," he told another interviewer. In a third interview, he regretted not raising the "Fleegate" scandal during last Sunday's presidential debate, or pressing Mr Clinton harder on the issue of Whitewater. He vowed to do so in their second debate next Wednesday. "There's no gag order on Whitewater," declared Nelson Warfield, his spokesman.

At a New Jersey rally, the Dole campaign produced Michael Chertoff, the chief counsel to the Republican-controlled Whitewater Committee, who recalled that Mr Clinton had promised the most ethical administration in American history.



ELECTION '96

"How many of that Administration are in jail now?" Mr Chertoff demanded. "How many members of that Administration had to resign in disgrace? Why does the White House spend more time hiding its files from subpoenas than it does pursuing drug dealers?"

At one point, Mr Dole called Mr Clinton a clown, telling a supporter: "Bozo's on his way out". It was an unfortunate remark, because President Bush called Mr Clinton and Mr Gore "Bozo" shortly before his crushing 1992 defeat. The attacks contrasted sharply with Mr Dole's civility during Sunday's debate, when he refused the moderator's invitation to list Mr Clinton's personal flaws, declined to raise Whitewater, and admitted: "I happen to like President Clinton personally". However, Mr Dole did rebuke Mr Clinton for his failure to address Mr Bush as "Mr President" in the 1992 debates.

The Clinton camp drew the obvious conclusion. "It seems they've come to the realisation that nothing has worked for them in this campaign," said Joe Lockhart, the chief spokesman. "They're now resorting to desperate attacks that are destined to fail. It's unfortunate that somebody with Bob Dole's reputation for integrity would put his name to these kind of attacks."

Mr Dole's new aggression presented Mr Kemp, his running-mate, with a dilemma as he prepared for last night's debate in St Petersburg, Florida. Running-mates traditionally deliver the searing personal attacks so their bosses can stay above the fray. However, Mr Kemp is more interested in ideas and policies than negative campaigning, and joined Mr Dole's ticket on condition that he would not play "attack dog".

A Reuters poll has put Mr Dole just five percentage points behind Mr Clinton, but it was sharply out of line with others, which gave Mr Clinton leads of 22, 21 and 16 points.

Spending dispute: Common Cause, an organisation that crusades for cleaner politics, demanded that a special prosecutor be appointed to investigate "the most massive violations of the campaign finance laws since the Watergate scandal". It said the Dole and Clinton campaigns had both spent tens of millions of dollars above their legal limit.

Irish famine compared to the Holocaust

New York schools to study 'evil of Britain'

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THE New York State Governor has passed legislation which compares British conduct during the Irish famine to that of the Nazis during the Holocaust and has ordered that the disastrous potato blight of 1845-49 be taught in human rights courses in New York schools.

George Pataki, apparently embracing the Irish-American vote, said that "history teaches us the Great Irish Hunger was not the result of a massive failure of the Irish potato crop but rather was the result of a deliberate campaign by the British to deny the Irish people the food they needed to survive".

As a result, he said, he had ordered that the Irish famine be included in the New York schools curriculum.

The new law will specifically add the Irish famine to a list of human rights abuses, which is currently limited to slavery, genocide and the Holocaust.

It will become part of a body of law which requires the state's Board of Regents to prescribe school lessons in patriotism, citizenship and human rights issues. The latter will now teach young New Yorkers the evil intent of the British.

"More than one million men, women and children died as a result of this mass starvation," said the Governor, who is of Hungarian descent. "Millions more were forced to flee their native land to avoid certain death, while large quantities of grain and livestock were exported from Ireland to England."



An engraving of a family during the Irish famine, in the course of which more than a million people died

as to the factual causes of one of the greatest calamities of humankind. Secondly, this law will stand as a living memorial to all those who suffered and died during the Great Hunger."

Mr Crowley added: "This lesson in humanity still needs to be taught. Hunger is still used as a tool of subjugation, as a means of keeping people down in places like Somalia, Ethiopia and China."

Another supporter of the Bill, Michael Hoblock, a state senator, said: "Being from Ukrainian ancestral ties, I am keenly aware of the necessity to inform New York's children of the injustices suffered by many of New York's ethnic population."

Further, Jewish lobbyists in the United States tend to guard jealously the status of the Holocaust as one of the greatest abuses of human rights.

Joseph Crowley, a state assemblyman who sponsored the legislation and is of Irish descent, said: "It is important that our students be educated

each minute that the late actor's features are shown on screen. Mr Lane has secured rights to the image that was George Burns."

Mr Lane said: "It's like a reverse Forrest Gump. Instead of inserting a real actor into newscast footage, we'll be inserting a computer-generated George Burns into new scenes with live actors."

The re-created Burns will play one of his best-known roles, as God - allowing *The Best Man* to become a sequel to the 1977 hit film, *Oh God*.

Conservative convert builds shrine to 'St Hillary'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

HILLARY CLINTON is more sinned against than sinning, according to a new biography of the President's wife. The book, which gave White House officials sleepless nights before publication, has emerged as more hagiography than hatchet job, to the astonishment of both friends and foes of the Clinton Administration.

The *Seduction of Hillary Clinton*, published this week, was widely expected to be a no-holds-barred expose of one of the most controversial

presidential wives in American history. The author, David Brock, a conservative journalist, is best known for investigations into President Clinton's sex life and for a caustic treatment at Anita Hill, the woman who accused Clarence Thomas, the Supreme Court judge, of sexual harassment.

He has said that he began the Clinton book "thinking that the conservative caricature was correct: that she was a malevolent, corrupt, power-mad shrew". But while Mr Brock clearly came to mock, he stayed to pray, and has spent 450 pages building his subject into an appropriate idol. He

argues that Mrs Clinton has unfairly been held to blame for her husband's failings. On Whitewater, he finds little proof that she abused her position at the Rose Law Firm to help her clients or herself. However, Mr Brock's critics say he offers no new evidence and dismisses "sometimes powerful" signs that Mrs Clinton lied about incidents in Arkansas and the White House.

Most of Mr Brock's sympathy for Mrs Clinton appears to stem from an unbridled analysis of her psychological state. "Despite her... youthful accomplishments, there seems to have remained a kind of empty place or well

of insecurity in Hillary," he argues. "Bill's perpetual philandering and cruel asides must have made her self-esteem all the harder to maintain."

He believes she persisted with what he calls a "flawed marriage" because "she has repeatedly succumbed to the seductive attraction of Bill Clinton himself". He dismisses the notion that reaching the White House, even through the role of First Lady rather than President, had powerful appeal.

Some critics suggest that he is trying to court the liberal press. Others say he is right: there simply is no new dirt to find.

155 journalists murdered

Los Angeles: A total of 155 journalists have been murdered in the Americas over the past seven years, according to a report by the Inter-American Press Association. The report said 62 were killed in Colombia; 19 in Mexico; 18 in Peru; 16 in El Salvador; 12 in Brazil; 12 in Guatemala; five in the United States; five in Venezuela; two in Haiti; two in Ecuador; one in Canada; and one in Paraguay. (AFP)

Burns resurrected as God

New York: Seven months after his death at the age of 100, the comedian George Burns has been cast as the star in a forthcoming Hollywood film (Quentin Letts writes).

Burns' face and the cigar-flavoured rasp of his voice will be re-created by computer gadgetry for *The Best Man*. Under a deal agreed between his family, his long-term manager, Irving Fein, and the film's producer, Scott

Lane, the Burns estate will receive \$20,000 (£12,800) for

each minute that the late actor's features are shown on screen. Mr Lane has secured rights to the image that was George Burns.

The re-created Burns will play one of his best-known roles, as God - allowing *The Best Man* to become a sequel to the 1977 hit film, *Oh God*.

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An old man's darling

There are two types of women who prefer older men: the smart and successful, and the babes. Jason Cowley reports

The youthful writer Cristina Odone was recently spotted stepping out with the grizzled broadcaster John Humphrys at the party to celebrate the rebirth of *Punch*. And she wasn't alone; no, it wasn't that Mr Humphrys was trailing women from his arms like streamers. It was just that the room seemed to be full of old men's darlings: young women cuddling up to men surely too old to be their husbands but behaving too flirtatiously to be their fathers. Now I have nothing against Mr Humphrys. As a broadcaster, he is tough, resolute and only occasionally rebarbative. His voice is strong. His tanned skin is drawn tightly across his face, and his silver hair looks as if it is trimmed every day. And with his reassuring smile, he seems more like a benign uncle than a feared slayer of politicians' cant. In fact, if you were asked for one adjective to describe him you would surely choose avuncular: it's not hard to picture him at home in a cotton dressing-gown sipping a late-night mug of warm, sugared milk.

As for Ms Odone... well, she's not the kind of woman one would have thought, to settle for being an old man's darling, even though she has lunched with Richard Ingrams, John Mortimer, Auberon Waugh and other self-styled oldies. The daughter of an Italian father and Swedish mother, Ms Odone combines exoticism with erudition: a former editor of the *Catholic Herald* and with intellectual pretensions (her debut novel, *The Shrine*, is testament to that), she teases her many admirers by hinting how "very, very bad" she would be were it not for her faith. According to the psychotherapist Rachel White there



Women who are successful and articulate often prefer older men. The journalist Polly Samson married the veteran rock star Dave Gilmour

are two kinds of old man's darling. The first are women such as Ms Odone, Polly Samson, the journalist who married veteran rock star Dave Gilmour, and Selina Scott. They are smart, articulate and successful, though they are seldom seen with men of their own age — perhaps because young men are intimidated by their formidable accomplishments.

The second kind is the babe, bimbo or good-time girl for whom physical attraction and companionship matter less than wealth and power. The American glamour model Anna Nicole Smith certainly fits the second category. She displayed an eye for the main chance when she married J. Howard Marshall, the octogenarian Texan billionaire.

Photographs of them have a grotesque fascination. The collagen and silicon-enhanced Anna Nicole seems always to



Stepping out: Cristina Odone and John Humphrys



be offering support to her frail husband. Perversely, they could almost be mother and son, so vulnerable does Marshall appear in her arms. Their relationship was the obverse of what has been called the "daddy syndrome": it is Anna Nicole who is in control.

Some of the most famous mistresses in history were old men's darlings — the actress Nell Gwyn, who hauled herself out of a life of servitude and poverty through her relationship with Charles II, Lily Langtry, and the first kiss-and-tell girl, Harriet Wilson. "Publish and be damned," the

Duke of Wellington told the scheming Harriet when she threatened to expose him, among others, in her memoirs. She did publish, famously beginning her account thus: "I shall not relate how at the age of 12 I became the mistress of the Earl of Craven." Wellington later denied ever having known her.

The psychologist Dorothy Rowe says: "Until the early part of this century most women had no way of supporting themselves, unless they worked in domestic service, or as prostitutes, or had inherited money. So, of course, in those circumstances a successful older man is going to appear attractive — and useful. The same applies today: it is obviously advantageous for an aspiring young actress to have a boyfriend like a famous director since he offers more than someone of her own age ever could."

There is also the aspect of paternal security: "If a woman had a particularly good relationship with her father as a little girl, then she may be looking for protection and security in a relationship. As for the man, I'm afraid it all comes down to the fact that it makes him feel good to be seen with younger women. It also sends a signal to other men that not only is he attractive to beautiful women, but he is still sexually competent."

The writer and columnist Petronella Wyatt, 27, says there was a time when she would never look at a man unless he was at least 15 years older. "But I now think that you should grow out of preferring older men, because if you don't, then you're never going to grow up yourself. That said, I would never go out with a man in his twenties."

Well, to echo Philip Larkin, it's good to get that learnt.

Dressing for distress

So James Hewitt wasn't in that video — but he was in that shabby sweater, says Nick Foulkes

THE most interesting sartorial point to be raised by the now infamous hoax video of Diana, Princess of Wales and James Hewitt is not what was worn or not worn, but what Captain Hewitt was photographed wearing on Tuesday: a sweater with a hole.

The fact that a man branded a cad by the *Establishment* has now taken to wearing the scruffy clothes which embody the traditional "don't know, don't care" attitude of many English aristocrats towards fashion begs the question: is the hole real or fake?

The capsule distressed wardrobe of the prototypical English gent must include at least one exhausted tweed jacket (preferably by Hawkes & Co before its amalgamation with



James Hewitt and pullover

Gieves), with leather binding on the cuffs and at least one prominent repair. Trousers should be of a grey worsted cloth, shiny with age. New suede shoes are distinctly caddish, but a highly scuffed pair of suede punched Oxfords, bought from Duckers in Oxford the Sixties, are acceptable.

The frayed shirt is the core of the look. Preferably a few fragments of the fabric remain at the collar, but most visible should be the white of the interlining. Cuffs — double of course — should be turned and frayed on both sides.

Scruffiness is a great English tradition. The immaculately dressed Duke of Windsor owned a spectacular corduroy jacket which he wore so much that the silk facings virtually detached themselves from the body of the jacket. Harold Macmillan never looked more patrician than at weekends in patched trousers.

The problem with such a look is that it takes time and not inconsiderable initial investment. Shabby shoes are great if they are Lobb, Foster, Wildsmith or Edward Green and have enjoyed several years' maturation. Likewise there are few items finer than an utterly clapped-out Savile Row suit.

But is Captain Hewitt guilty of picking a hole in his sweater? His favourite gent's outfitters is Hackett. "I wonder if it is one of our sweaters," muses chairman Jeremy Hackett. "If it is, he has been shopping at Hackett for years so the chances are the hole is genuine. Many of our customers like things they feel comfortable with."

Viewed in this light, it is perfectly feasible that in the face of ostracism and public opprobrium the once natty Captain has taken refuge in "comfort clothes" in much the same way that some depressed people binge on comfort foods such as chocolate and ice-cream.

OR IS it that the Captain is revealing his erudition? The academic John Bayley displays a heroic absent-mindedness about his wardrobe, while that elegant publisher of literature in translation, Christopher MacLehose of Harvill, has been seen on occasion sporting a frayed collar.

However, Mr MacLehose hotly defends his shirts. "In all these years, nobody has complained about them hitherto," he says testily. What is more, he has a warning for those who try too hard to be shabby. "It is sheer affection on anybody's part who makes a habit of it."

Captain Hewitt, you have been warned.

The servant problem

What would you do if you suddenly found yourself very, very rich? Buy a star sapphire? An exquisite house in the country? Present your dear old alma mater with a new library? Whatever form the luxury might take, the idea of riches is associated with large

capital outlay and outrageous personal indulgence.

The rich are different, no doubt about it. Except, that is, when they are just like you and me. Or, indeed, when they are you and me. According to a government survey on family spending published today, in order to number

yourself among the richest families in Britain, it is sufficient to command a nanny, a third car and a surprisingly modest outlay on wine. The very rich, one learns, spend £7.50 a week on the stuff, a sum which, though insufficient to cover the cost of a bottle of Sainsbury's Médoc,

is more than three times the national average.

Of course, it is true that almost no one admits to being rich. But what the report has pinpointed is that however poor one may feel, certain things infallibly indicate prosperity — and chief among them is employing staff.

Fifty years ago, Evelyn Waugh wrote to Nancy Mitford in France, enclosing a picture of himself surrounded by old retainers. "If you lived here," replied Mitford, "you wouldn't dare have that photograph taken because having such a millions of servants would be a sign of wealth and you'd be taxed accordingly." But as the modern employer of staff digests the unexpected news of his official wealth, he (or she) will probably reflect that the cost of hiring someone to mind the children is only the beginning of the problem. It would be a bold head of household nowadays who dared to ask Tricia, the Australian wonder-nanny, to line up with the 25-year-old Croatian cleaning-lady for a team photograph.

The financial chasm between rich and poor may have widened as ever, but class distinctions have dwindled and in doing so have created an extreme social dis-ease. Acutely aware of each other as Fellow Human Beings, we now find it impossible to cope with giving or receiving orders. Take the recent sad story of Lady Apsley and her housekeeper, Carol Parker. Mrs Parker took exception to Lady Apsley's manner which was, she felt, calculated to undermine her sense of self-worth. Indeed, so grievously undermined did she feel that she resorted to nicking the Apsley family heirlooms.

This is, of course, exactly what we are terrified of in our dealings with staff. Now that the notion of a hierarchy of master and servant is, rightly, taboo, we find ourselves employing people just like us. But we can't relax about it. Guilt and anguish come written into the contract of employment. We don't just want our domestic help to bring a smile to the baby's face and a sparkle to the cutlery. We want them to love us as well.

JANE SHILLING

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High dose of courage



Dr Thomas Stuttford on the bravery of Linda McCartney; fighting meningitis; and the benefits in a pint of beer

Patients with breast cancer have been looking rather quizzically at their doctors this week. The news that Linda McCartney had flown to California to have further treatment made them feel, not unnaturally, that life-saving treatment was available to the rich and powerful, but denied to those on the council estates.

Despite traditional treatment last year in Britain, Linda McCartney has had a recurrence of her breast cancer.

In America, over the past five years, high-dose chemotherapy for the treatment of breast cancer, when it has spread to distant parts of the body, has been adopted by many cancer specialists with an almost religious fervour.

It is this therapy which has lured Linda McCartney to California.

High-dose chemotherapy with stem cell transplantation has not yet passed through the randomised trial stage of development either in America or here, and so despite its popularity in America, where about a thousand patients are treated with it every year, it cannot yet be said to be of proven benefit.

Agreeing to high-dose chemotherapy is a brave decision, and not one to be taken without being fully aware of its unpleasant and dangerous nature.

About 5 per cent of the women having it will die from the treatment rather than their cancer.

A woman having this treatment should expect to be in hospital for three weeks, much of the time in intensive care, and she will probably feel ill for many months afterwards.

The procedure differs from unit to unit and in some the initial dose is repeated once the woman is strong enough, usually after about three weeks.

In high-dose chemotherapy, patients suffer all the usual side effects of chemotherapy, such as hair loss, nausea, vomiting, extreme tiredness



Linda McCartney, supported by Paul, went to America for high-dose chemotherapy when her breast cancer recurred

and generally feeling rotten. In addition it will seriously damage the bone marrow and can cause complications to both the liver and heart.

The problem of bone marrow destruction is overcome by the transplantation of stem cells, derived from either the bone marrow or peripheral blood, but now usually obtained from the blood because it is the safer method.

Dr Ian Smith, consultant to the Royal Marsden Hospital, in London, said: "The jury is out on high-dose chemotherapy with transplantation."

"We won't know for about another two years whether it is

of real benefit until the results of randomised trials set up in various centres report their results."

Dr Smith said there was adequate funding for the trials and that, in his opinion, British doctors are following a responsible course in not recommending distressing and dangerous treatment to patients until it could be shown to be of benefit.

Most of the trials set up here use the procedure recommended by Dr Bill Peters, of Duke University, North Carolina. But, at the Royal Marsden, high-dose chemotherapy is being tested in a rather different way — a pump has been devised which will give the patient a slow, continuous trickle of drugs. Results of the Marsden research are also, as yet, unknown.

Professor Tom Oliver, Professor for Clinical Oncology at the Royal Hospital (Bart's and London), said that the British approach to high-dose treatment was not so much conservative as judicious; for until the results of the trials were known, its value was uncertain. Both Professor Oliver and Dr Smith commented on an encouraging report from South Africa, but the nature of the trial meant that statistics from it could not be uncritically accepted.

The answer to the question: need Mrs McCartney have gone to America? was provided by the London Clinic, the

private hospital which treated Child B. Dr Len Price, the oncologist, was emphatic in his reply: "No. We practice high-dose chemotherapy with stem cell transplantation at the London Clinic. At the clinic we use seven anti-cancer drugs rather than the three advocated by Dr Peters. We also recommend two peripheral blood stem cell transplantations as a rule and, if need be, more."

"Most of the patients we see already have very advanced disease before we start treatment and without treatment there could only have been one end. Even so, we hope to offer them a 20-25 per cent chance of prolonging their life for several years."

Dr Price is in favour of treating patients with cancer of the breast, who are known to be at high risk, for future trouble, with early high-dose chemotherapy and not waiting for the problem to occur.

Dr Price acknowledges the usefulness of random trials and that in this instance British doctors, like some of their American counterparts, were being too conservative. "In Britain we are, after all, at the bottom of the league table for the survival of breast cancer."

"Much of this trouble may be because we do not have enough medical oncologists to co-operate with the surgeons and radiotherapists, but perhaps some of our bad figures are the result of our conservative nature."

OF all the infectious diseases in Britain, meningitis is the most frightening. No age group is free from danger when an outbreak occurs in the vicinity. Parents and grandparents fear for the children, adolescents are concerned for their friends as well as themselves and everybody is aware that although the disease is more common in children and adolescents, it can attack at any age.

The anxiety meningitis instils in a community is not only because of the numbers it kills but because of the nature and speed of the death. Last year a middle-aged woman, the sister of one of my patients, told her husband at breakfast before he went off to work that she thought she was sickening for flu. By tea-time meningococcal septicaemia had been diagnosed and later that evening she died.

This patient had been immediately and correctly diagnosed by her own doctor and given emergency penicillin before being admitted to hospital, but even so it was too late to save her life. It is easy to kill all the meningococci with antibiotics but counteracting the damage done to a system by the bacterial toxins which were causing the septicaemia is almost impossible.

Meningococci are common bacteria: one in ten people at any one time has the organism in their nose or throat but nobody knows why it should suddenly turn lethal.

When a disease is so difficult to diagnose and kills so quickly, vaccination against it is the obvious medical answer. There are already vaccines against infections caused by meningococci

How the City helps to confront a killer disease



Workers in the City are supporting research

groups A and C but, unfortunately, in Britain the most common group is meningitis B. As yet there is no effective vaccination against the strains of Group B meningococci found in the United Kingdom.

In other parts of the world

which have strains of Group B meningococci there are useful vaccines. Doctors in Cuba claim to have eradicated Group B meningococci by vaccination and the injection has also proved to be effective in other South American countries.

Professor Michael Levin, who treats meningitis cases at St Mary's Hospital in London, is anxious to test the vaccine which has proved effective in South America against the strain of meningitis or meningococci Group B found in Britain. It is planned to carry out experiments to see if blood taken from Cuban children who have been vaccinated against meningitis would kill the British strains of the organism. If the experiment is successful, time being spent on British trials would be dramatically reduced and lives saved.

Funds were needed for Professor Levin's work, so he approached the medical charity Remedi. Remedi had contacts with the October Club, a group of archetypal young City men who have raised nearly a million pounds for medical research in the past nine years. Next week the October Club is meeting at The Savoy where it hopes to raise enough money to finance the St Mary's project. If successful, club members will have reached their target of a million in nine years. But, what is more important, is

they may well have brought the time nearer when parents don't have to search for the early signs of meningitis (fever, vomiting, neck stiffness, headache, drowsiness, irritability and distinctive small red spots) every time their child has a cold.

Forbidden fruit from the hedges



A REPORT this week shows that the destruction of the British hedgerow, with all its autumnal fruiting trees, continues apace. Some older hedgerows have been growing for a thousand years and at this time of year contain a wide variety of berries.

Many berries, such as blackberries and hips, are nutritious but others contain complex organic chemicals

which have evolved to deter humans and animals from eating them. Human metabolism hasn't adapted so well to dealing with poisons in plants as has that of many wild animals. Consequently humans, and young children in particular, are in greater danger. Every parent knows daphne and black nightshade are deadly, fewer that Virginia creeper and horse chestnuts can also cause trouble.

If it is suspected that children have been eating unwisely

in the garden or along hedges, it helps to make them sick immediately, and they must be taken at once to a casualty department. The casualty officer's job is made easier if evidence of what the child has eaten is also brought along.

Each district has a poisons unit which can give expert advice to emergency services, and volumes such as the *Oxford Text Book of Medicine* contain lists of all common poisonous plants and their antidotes.

It really is good for you

THERE is good news from America for those who enjoy a glass of stout. The advantages of drinking red wine, two to four glasses a day, are now becoming universally accepted. But it had been thought that beer was only beneficial as a cardio protective drug because of the alcohol it contained.

Research workers in the United States have now shown that dark brown beers like Guinness, as well as red wine, contain flavonoids which, when acting as antioxidants, are thought to reduce the risk of coronary arterial disease.

It seems unlikely, however, that Guinness will resurrect its pre-war advertising campaign designed to persuade doctors to tell their patients that Guinness was good for them.

At the time the complex world of flavonoids and their role as naturally occurring antioxidants in protecting tissues from free radicals was unknown, but now that the mechanism is understood, it will be reassuring when enjoying a pint of Guinness at the George and Dragon to know that some scientists really do believe that it might be good for the coronary arteries.

Lovely day for a GUINNESS



A head of its time... a classic Guinness advertisement

Strokes could be prevented

A PARTICULAR type of irregular heartbeat known as fibrillation is liable to cause a stroke. The disordered action of the heart results in small emboli — clots — escaping into the cerebral circulation, but the danger from these clots can be reduced if the patient is treated with adequate doses of anti-coagulant drugs.

Research published in *Pulse* magazine shows that only a half of "younger" pensioners whose hearts are fibrillating receive adequate treatment. Of those over 74, even fewer are properly treated, even though the risk of a stroke is higher.

Dr Mark Sudlow, of the Medical Research Council, estimates that the correct use of anti-coagulants would prevent 9,000 strokes a year.

A review in the medical magazine *Monitor* has also investigated the unnecessary loss of life from strokes caused by inadequate treatment.

The reviewer suggests that the lesson to be learnt from new research is that if anti-coagulation is to be prescribed, it should be done properly. Treatment with the anti-coagulant Warfarin, properly monitored, is recommended as the therapy of choice.

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Bacon falls violently in love

Day four: Bacon's obsessive affair with the self-destructive Peter Lacy takes him to Tangier, where the artist, tortured by sexual jealousy, finds comfort in casual beatings in dark alleys



FRANCIS BACON REVEALED

Bacon was near 40 when he fell in love for the first time. He met Peter Lacy in the Colony Room, a newly-opened Soho drinking club, and, as Bacon described it, their mutual attraction was anomalous from the start. "What Peter really liked was young boys. He was actually younger than me, but he didn't seem to realise it. It was a kind of mistake that he went with me at all. Of course, it was the most total disaster from the start. Being in love in that extreme way — being totally, physically obsessed by someone — is like having some dreadful disease. I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy."

Lacy had the advantage, like Eric Hall before him, of inherited money, which allowed him for most of his life not to work. Because of this, according to Bacon, "he felt the futility of life all the more clearly". Lacy had also been a fighter pilot in the Battle of Britain, and afterwards he became a test pilot for a while. "All these things obviously shatter your nerves," Bacon reflected, long after Lacy's death. "Most of the time Peter was terribly neurotic, even hysterical."

Part of the most intense period of their relationship (which Bacon characterised as "four years of continuous horror, with nothing but violent rows") was lived — again uncharacteristically for the artist — in the country, not far from Henley-on-Thames. Bacon recalled Lacy's invitation to come and live with him there: "Of course, he hated my painting right from the beginning, and he said, 'You can leave your painting and come and live with me.' And I said: 'What does living with you mean?' And he said: 'Well, you could live in a corner of my cottage on straw.' He wanted to have me chained to the wall. Peter was very kinky in all sorts of ways. He liked to have people watching as we had sex. But he was so neurotic that living together would never have worked." Even if Bacon did not accept the invitation to move in, he was a frequent visitor, and he even managed to get some work done by setting up a makeshift studio in a conservatory. Bacon's need to paint, then,



Detail from Pope I, 1951: the series exposes Bacon's feelings about his lover

had proved even stronger than his obsessive passion for Lacy. In 1953, Bacon completed 21 paintings, the most he had ever painted in a year. It was now that Bacon's obsession with the Pope theme took hold. *Study for Portrait* became the first in a series of eight fully recognisable portraits — caught as if in successive frames on a film. This was the longest series Bacon had ever undertaken, and it confirmed his bent for working in variations on a theme, a practice that came naturally to someone of indubitably went beyond the attraction of a particular colour.

In the Pope, one might say, the two most important elements in life for Bacon, the erotic and the aesthetic, were intertwined, and it seems reasonable to suppose that is why he was drawn to the theme so repeatedly and why it gave rise to some of his greatest images, such as the magnificent *Study of a screaming Pope* done after the Velazquez portrait in that same productive year, 1953. In this picture, the painted curtains of the backdrop are made to fall through the Pope's face, as if its flesh hung in folds: this is a peculiarly Baconian conceit, like the use of safety-pins and blind tassels or, later, lightbulbs and arrows.

Although he enjoyed being physically dominated, Bacon instinctively sought the upper hand in all his important relationships. He could be whipped and physically abused, but by his toughness and intelligence he kept ultimate control. With Lacy, he had lost it spectacularly. He could withstand the violence and the rows, the scenes which ended with him being beaten up, his clothes destroyed and his paintings slashed; there were sides of it he positively relished. But he was kept, mentally as well as physically, in thrall: being less in love, Lacy seemed stronger and freer, and the pangs of sexual jealousy tormented Bacon as intensely as any Furies he had known. Naturally promiscuous but above all devoted to his own destruction, Lacy kept always slightly out of reach. The *folie à deux* lasted within its own pain and degradation. By the time of the first *Van Gogh* portraits, it had reached an inevitable impasse. But when Lacy left for Tangier, that did not stop Bacon from following him.

Tangier acted like a magnet for homosexuals during the 1950s. The Moroccan port offered not only acceptance but widespread acquiescence in matters of sexual preference. The sight of crowds of native men in brilliantly coloured jellabas strolling hand in hand together through the town would have been particu-



The doomed and damaged Peter Lacy, left, dominated the younger Bacon, right, and his death continued to haunt the artist in his portraits

larly alluring to foreign homosexuals forced to hide their affections. Bacon's hangout in Tangier was Dean's Bar. Dean was a mellifluous spoken black man of mysterious origins who seemed born to run a bar. For Lacy, Dean's had become a place of near enslavement; and it marked the beginning of his last, rapid decline. Whatever his means when Bacon first took up with him in the early 1950s, they had dwindled to the point where he was obliged to "tinkle the ivories" in Dean's virtually day and night in order to eke out an existence. "Periodically Peter got very drunk," recalls David Herbert, a long-time resident of Tangier, "and on one of his benders he took a knife and slashed three-quarters of the paintings that Francis had been working on the previous six months. Francis took it quite calmly: in fact he seemed almost pleased." The British Consul-General in Tangier, Bryce Neim, became worried because "Francis was frequently found by the police beaten up in some street in Tangier in the early hours of the morning". Herbert goes on, "Bryce complained to the chief of police and asked to have more police on duty in the darker alleys. A few weeks passed; the beatings continued. Then the chief called on Bryce and said, 'Pardon, Monsieur le Consul-Général, mais il n'y a rien à faire. Monsieur Bacon aime ça.'"

Bacon brought back very little from his lengthy stays in Tangier: he abandoned numerous works in progress.

He liked to have people watching as we had sex' and either he or Lacy destroyed most of the others. But the whole atmosphere and the luminosity of Morocco marked him deeply. There can be no doubt that the explosion of strong colours in the *Van Gogh* series is at least partly attributable to Bacon's experience of the North African light (just as Van Gogh's own palette took on a new intensity after his arrival in Arles). In *Van Gogh in a Landscape*, Bacon has actually used a view of the countryside outside Tangier, which impressed him so much that it later became the sole subject of a wonderfully mysterious painting called *Landscape near Malabata*. Tangier. Dated 1963 and painted in London, this picture in fact had a deeply personal importance for the artist: it was in that landscape that Lacy had been buried.

The Tangier interlude and Bacon's affair with Lacy was to last for another couple of years. "Peter had been very tough when I first knew him. Then he fell for this Moroccan boy, and after he went off and lived in Tangier he lost that toughness. I think it had something to do with the Arab

men. He had also always been the most terrible kind of drunk, but by this time he was completely out of control. The boy had left him and so on. Anyway he said he never wanted to see me again. Then one day he just telephoned and said, 'From now on, consider me as dead.' And I was very upset, because I had been deeply fond of him. And then much later, he sent this telegram asking me to go out and stay with him again in Tangier, and like a fool I went. Peter wasn't there when I arrived. But there was this Arab boy, sitting up in a fig tree in the courtyard, and he asked me whether he could pick the figs. I said yes, certainly he could. And in the end he climbed in through the

window, and he was terribly good-looking. "Then Peter came back and found us both in bed, and he got so absolutely mad he went round and broke every single thing in the place. I had to go out and try and spend the night on the beach."

Peter by that time was drinking three bottles of whisky a day, which no one can take. He was killing himself with drink. He set out to do it, like a suicide, and I think in the end his pancreas simply exploded. After that disastrous trip, I had no news of him until that exhibition at the Tate."

News of Lacy's death was among the telegrams that

arrived to congratulate the artist on the opening day of his Tate retrospective. Bacon had never come to terms with the self-destructive passion that had drawn him to Lacy nor with the latter's rejection of him; and now that he was dead, Bacon was inconsolable. He saw Lacy's death as a suicide, and he interpreted the fact that it had coincided with his opening as a deliberate extra punishment, as if he had to atone for the violence of his art in personal misfortune. The artist was convinced that the voracious Fury-like shapes on an orange ground that dominated the first room of the exhibition still pursued him.

In his grief, Bacon attempted several times to bring his

dead friend back to a kind of life through the act of portraying him. In both named and unnamed portraits, Lacy seems to be struggling to surface through the damaging smears of paint that blind an eye or excise an ear. Lacy himself had become part of the artist's own myth of guilt and retribution. He began to picture himself too, in his first acknowledged self-portraits, in a last spasm of raging pink flesh and black shadow before dissolution. Indeed, from this point in his development, when portraits of people became so central to his work, each portrait was painted as if it might be the last.

● Francis Bacon: *Autism of an Enigma* by Michael Peppiatt. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20

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'He liked to have people watching as we had sex'

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

FASHION SPECIAL

"What really divides the Brit from the Euro is his wardrobe... 32-page men's fashion extra in The Sunday Times Magazine this weekend"

ZOE HELLER
at a Hollywood tribute gala
"The biggest suckers when it comes to the business of show and all its hideous, cornball clichés are invariably the studio execs themselves"

KEITH WATERHOUSE
on a grown-up Huck Finn
"When Huck Finn came to the town of Foxburg that morning he was a boy, and when he went to bed near enough the tolling morning, he was a man"

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Sitting at the window in Bournemouth

Peter Stothard assesses the Tory party conference: a decent show, but lacking the necessary force

Bournemouth brings out the natural nostalgia of the Conservative Party. Blackpool and Brighton are alien places which Tories take over from time to time. Bournemouth is a delicate blue even when the Tories are not here. The promenades maintain that exotic seaside spirit which the local hero, Thomas Hardy, described more than a century ago. It is still the otherworldly town in which Tess of the d'Urbervilles tried to hide from her problems. If John Major and Margaret Thatcher were to kiss anywhere, could any site be more suitable than this Disneyland of the 1870s, with its tropical trees, fanciful residences and magical attractions for the ill-starred? If the Conservatives had to choose anywhere to stare defeat in the face, nowhere could be better than here among the comforting chintz and china.

The Tories this week have been polite and determined. They have made a decent attempt at brushing to one side the corruption charges against their colleagues and friends. They have been unexpectedly self-controlled for the most part on the European issues which are tearing their party apart. But every act of Victorian restraint has taken place in a cool, laboratory-like atmosphere. It is hard to believe that the hostile national mood is going to be changed from here.

In Hardy's "Mediterranean lounging place on the English Channel", the problem of a European currency inevitably feels closer than it was by the cold seas of Blackpool at Labour's conference last week. In some representatives, the resulting emotion is a resigned defiance. Malcolm Rifkind was heard yesterday with the sort of conference-hall respect that Conservative Foreign Secretaries used to be used to. The Prime Minister commanded rapt attention for his explanation of why a single currency should not be ruled out. But for others, on the fringe and on the fringe of the fringe, Britain's relationship with the Continent is a subject too corrosive to be contained. As night falls over the fairy lights and domes, the anger, like the townscape, is more imposing still: there is a real sense of guilt — churned over and chattered about at every level — that the party is letting down the country in order to keep the Government alive.

Not even the first Mrs Thomas Hardy, the one who found Tess of the d'Urbervilles obscene and *Jude the Obscure* a scandal, could have found much fault with Tory discipline over the past two days. Norman Tebbit, who is still remembered fondly for his leadership at another difficult Bournemouth conference, a decade ago, restricted his civil warfare to an assault on European Commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan. Even the youth movement has lost the heart to make a fuss; its leaders find better prospects, as well as old Thatcherite friends, with Sir James Goldsmith. There is a Bournemouth programme, a string of stale Bournemouth jokes ("Labour will be for open government what stakeholding was to Dracula"; Ian Lang yesterday), but there is no passion, nothing that would make the ordinary Bournemouth holidaymakers smell politics if they did not know already that politics was here.

Bournemouth has long been a town which wealthy tourists visit year after year, where they meet

their friends and stay for a few weeks among the gazebos and the palm trees. In Hardy's transparent placename code it was Sandbourne, situated on the edge of his fictional Wessex, a rapidly expanding boomtown that was already almost beyond the confines of the rural world. Even when it rained here, it was soft rain: "like silken strings", as he wrote in a poem of 1875.

In 1986, the Tebbit year of reconstruction after the Westland debacle, I remember a Bournemouth full of excited Tory activists and ministers who were genuinely pleased to be here. Cabinet members seemed relaxed when meeting one another, talking as though they had things to say. This year everyone looks as though he or she is just off somewhere else. The abiding image is of a minister with one arm in his coat, the other arm waving to someone behind or ahead. In 1996, this is not a political destination; it is a waiting room.

Those awaiting next year include the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, who no longer even attempts on the platform to conceal his sighs and sneers at speeches of which he disapproves. He did clap yesterday as a representative complained of interference in Britain from Brussels, but it was the weary clap of the headmaster when the school troublemaker wins a prize, the headmaster whom the school governors dare not fire. For those on the right of the Cabinet, the height of rhetorical ambition is to seem like a decent minister for the next few months and a dynamic party leader for the next few years. Michael Howard's speech on Tuesday was a fine example of the genre. Michael Portillo, with

the dangers of excess dimmed into his head from last year, will try the same trick today. But no speech of that kind can stop the breath or fire the blood.

The Prime Minister spoke yesterday like a husband trying to understand the marital relationship that he has lost. He was modest and reasonable. For a few moments he swept away the troublesome Cabinet and the unappreciative country. He told the representatives that they were "the heart and soul"; if he could have kissed every one of them, he would have done.

On a much-discussed visit to Bournemouth in 1875, Hardy wrote a poem about his own newly difficult marriage. In "We Sat at the Window", he describes a miserable day when even the most "silken strings" of the south coast were unbearable. "We were irked by the scene, by each other; yes," he wrote, in lines long pored over by biographers.

Later, working as his own literary spin-doctor, he revised the piece. "We were irked by the scene, by our own selves; yes," he wrote, in an attempt to persuade himself, it seems, that Mr and Mrs Hardy had separate problems rather than a problem that threatened their relationship. The original, however, turned out to be the more accurate portrait. Mr Major and his party can certainly put on a decent show for a few days in Bournemouth. Real unity, however, is far away. Only brute force and passion will fight Labour down from its heights of popularity. And brute force is no more part of Bournemouth's spirit this week than it has been in any other week of its history.

Aleksandr Lebed, who hopes to succeed Boris Yeltsin, threatens to name Russia's guilty men

There have been no hostilities in Chechnya for almost a month now. This is due to accords which I signed in Khasavyurt, Ingushetia, with the chief of staff of the Chechen opposition armed forces, Asia Maskhadov. But it does not mean that the armed conflict is over.

The accords stipulate the signing of two more documents, which we have defined as the framework of relations on Chechnya's status and on the delineation of powers between Russia and Chechnya. The republic's status is thus far defined by the Russian constitution, according to which Chechnya is a member of the Russian Federation. Under the Khasavyurt agreements, its permanent status is to be determined by the year 2001. I think this was the correct decision. Such decisions must be adopted in cold blood, proceeding from international practices, laws, procedures and regulations — methods which have already proved their value.

Life will take its course over the next five years: the process of restoration and construction will begin, and the situation will be appraised soberly. Much will depend on how productively and constructively the Russian bodies of state power work.

Serious talks are needed on the

second provision of the Khasavyurt agreements, but it is unclear at present with whom they should be conducted. Russia does not recognise the separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, while the Chechen opposition does not recognise the official leader of the republic, Dokku Zavgayev.

A coalition government is needed to begin preparations for winter, restore gas and water supplies, mend the roofs and so forth, and to carry out detailed preparations for free elections. These elections are to be monitored by Russian and international observers. When a legitimate leader is elected, it will be possible to talk with him on any issue, including the distribution of powers between Russia and Chechnya.

Many hotheads think it will be easy to form a coalition government and to tackle the many problems, from restoration of the devastated economy to provision of

pensions and other benefits, creation of jobs and payment of wages. But things are not so easy as they think. I am sure, however, that the Chechens will be able to come to an agreement. Among them here are intellectuals and professional executives who are perfectly capable of handling these difficult but soluble problems of transition.

The Russian public's reaction to the Khasavyurt agreements differs. The reaction of politicians is negative rather than positive. I have virtually been accused of betraying Russian interests. The country's leadership has not given a clear-cut appraisal of this document. The Minister of Justice, Valentin Kovalev, has challenged its legal and political status. His position is rather strange, to put it mildly, as hostilities have been stopped, in keeping with the document, which allegedly "has no legal force".

Another thing also seems strange to me. Many people, including

politicians, were screaming "stop the war" — until recently. Once peace had been established (a rather timid, uncertain and so far short-lived peace, I admit, but nonetheless one that gives hope for the future), we discovered that no one but soldiers' mothers and officers' wives wanted it. No one is in a hurry to strengthen it or to take any political or economic steps to make it truly irreversible and so bring the situation back to normal. None of the critics of the Khasavyurt accords has come up with a single constructive proposal for terminating this meaningless war.

Russia has, for the second time, stepped on the same rake. The first time was in Afghanistan. There, we began the war with lofty aims in mind but ended up with a war against the people. The same has happened in Chechnya. Many are fighting, not because they like any particular regime but to avenge

their dead relatives and ruined homes. No military leader, even a genius, has ever won a war against the people. The war must be stopped resolutely with tough measures, and a political dialogue should begin. There is no other solution to this military conflict. That is why I reject all talk of Russia's integrity and indivisibility. Is it possible to ensure the integrity of Russia by killing hundreds and maiming thousands of people every day? And yet my critics claim that to stop the war by civilised methods is a threat to the country's integrity. On the contrary, it should be the other way around.

I am often asked if I know who was responsible for this war. Yes, I know all of them by name. I am also sure that this war has economic roots camouflaged in politics. Now is not the time to name these people, because it is still quite possible that the war will resume with fresh force and on an even larger scale. First, we must stop the slaughter and return to peaceful life. Only then will the prosecutors decide the degree of each perpetrator's responsibility. Whatever others may say, I am sure that the Chechen war is over for Russia.

The author is Secretary of President Yeltsin's Security Council.

How I made peace with the Chechens

An impoverished currency

Economic weakness in much of Europe means the euro is doomed

The argument for the gold standard was a simple one: it preserved the long-term value of money. Between 1799 and 1899, the purchasing power of the pound, convertible for most of the period into gold sovereigns, rose by 10 per cent; between 1899 and 1997, with Britain having gone off the gold standard in 1931, it has fallen by 98 per cent. This decline has done great harm to Britain: it destroyed the value of monetary savings; it reduced investment and threw onto the mercies of the State many people who would otherwise have been able to look after themselves.

The euro is supposed to start on January 1, 1999, with at least six member countries, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The question the Germans are asking is whether the euro will be as good as the mark. That concerns Hans Tietmeyer, the president of the Bundesbank. "It is important," he said on Monday, "that the member countries do not just reach the criteria through a breathless short-term effort with one-off savings quickly coupled together."

Yet the euro can never be as good as the mark. Currencies are supported by the economic and financial strengths of the nations which issue them, and by the cultural attitudes of their people. The first group of euro-participants will not be able to put behind the new currency the strength Germany has put behind the mark. By the standards of the mark, the Swiss franc or the yen, the euro will not be a triple-A currency. By the standards of gold, it deserves no more than a C.

Although the pound has lost 98 per cent of its purchasing power in this century, gold, as in earlier centuries, has maintained or slightly increased its purchasing power. At current values, the gold sovereign is worth about £60 and has fully compensated for the long-term inflation of paper money. The euro is just another paper currency. The only questions are how much value it will lose, and how fast.

The Brussels assumption is that all the members of the EU will eventually join the single currency. That is why they talk about the "ins" and the "pre-ins": they do not expect any country to remain permanently out. It is also assumed that the European Union will

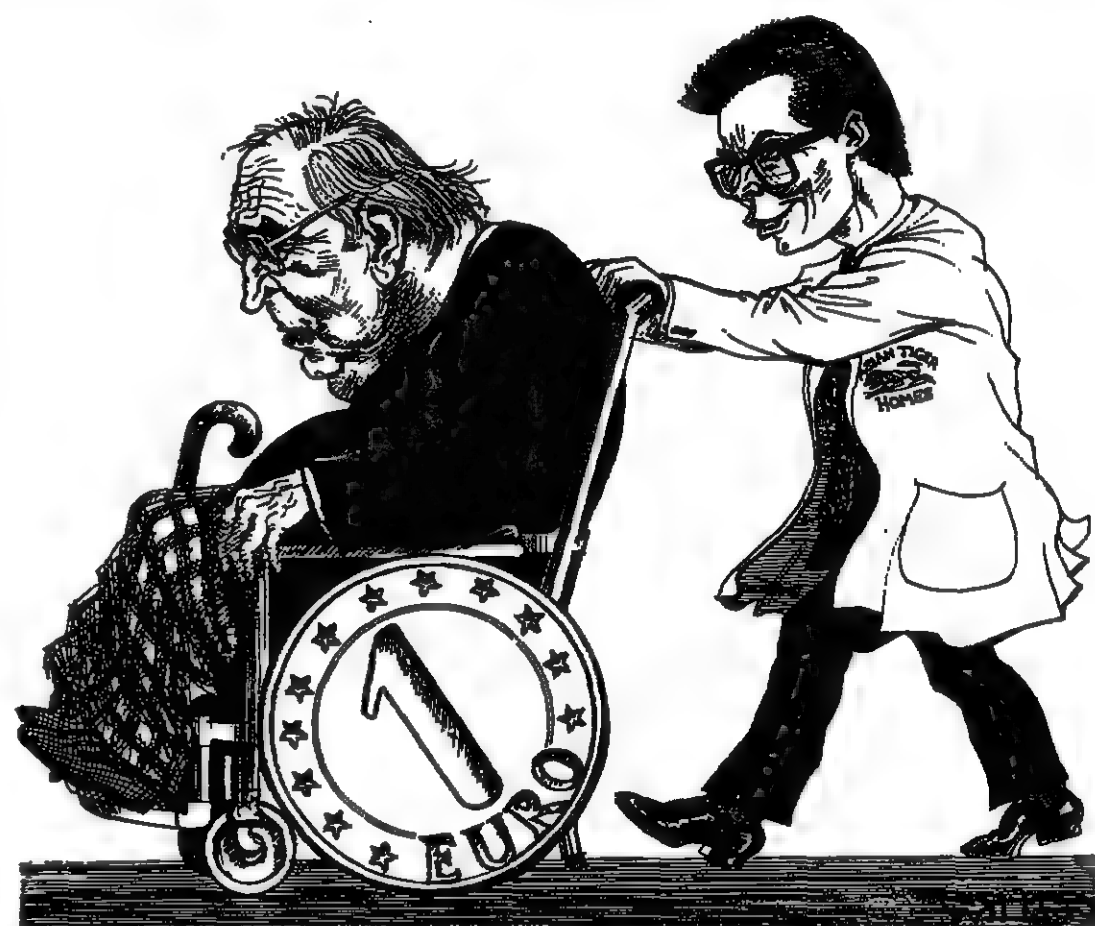
expand to the East, bringing in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and probably Slovakia. What sort of basis would such a Europe provide for a single currency?

The candidate nations of Eastern Europe have a combined population of 65 million, most of whom are poor. The present EU population is about 350 million. The East German population, which is still placing a heavy burden on the German economy, is only 17 million. The new candidate nations are therefore the equivalent of four East Germans, or roughly the same proportion to the population of the EU as East Germany was to Germany as a whole. The EU is not as rich as Germany, and has existing regional problems, including Ireland, Portugal, Greece, Southern Spain and Southern Italy, with a combined population of at least another 50 million. A quarter of the bigger EU will be poor.

Europe's population is ageing. Of the existing 15 members, only Ireland is at a replacement level in live births. By the second quarter of the next century, Europe's population will be in absolute decline. As most of the continental pension schemes are unfunded, this large growth in the numbers of retired people will put pressure on budgets. Like the United States, but unlike the countries of Asia, Europe has inadequate savings rates, so many of these pensioners will not be able to look after themselves.

The euro suffers these prospective burdens of 100 million poor people and perhaps 100 million pensioners. Yet that is only the start of Europe's problems. The whole economy has for 20 years been steadily losing competitiveness in industrial exports relative to Asia and in high technology products relative to the United States. If one compares the three major industrial areas of the world, Asia, North America and Europe, it is Europe that is falling behind. In 15 years' time, industrial Germany could well have become the rust-bowl of Europe, and Europe could be the rust-bowl of the world.

Strong currencies have always been based on strong economies. If one looks back on the modern history of strong currencies — the pound, the dollar, the yen, the mark itself — they have all been based on periods of great national economic strength. The pound was



the dominant currency when Britain was the workshop of the world; the dollar was dominant in the period of American industrial supremacy after the Second World War, the yen rose in strength when Japan was the leading power in world exports. If Europe continues to be a high-tax, high-cost, high-unemployment and low-competitiveness area, it is inconceivable that the euro will become a strong currency. Yet the social and political forces which are resisting change in Europe, are extremely powerful.

There will also be specific currency crises. One of the most likely is the return to world energy shortages which caused the inflation of the 1970s. The Asian economy, of some three billion people, is expanding three or four times as fast as the Europeans. Asia will increasingly be in competition with Europe for all scarce raw materials, including oil. Even the present Middle Eastern anxieties have pushed the oil price back up to \$25 a barrel. The Middle East is likely to remain a political earthquake zone. A major oil shock is more likely than not to occur at some time in the next ten to 15 years, and if the euro is the weakest big currency, the euro will suffer the worst inflation.

There is also the cultural question. Already the European Union,

which sometimes seems to be so Germanic, is a political society in which German speakers are in the minority, and German Protestants — the elite group of German discipline — in an even smaller minority. Even if one thought that the centre of gravity of the new Europe would be German, which could be a mistake, it would not be Frankfurt, let alone Berlin, but Munich. The existing 15 nations are in the majority Latin, Catholic, Mediterranean, or at least Southern. The addition of nearly 40 million Polish Catholics will emphasise this Catholic cultural predominance, even if the Catholic Church itself is in decline in Europe. Historically, Latin, Catholic and Mediterranean nations have not had the stern self-discipline that a strong currency requires.

There is finally the issue of taxation. All paper currencies are based on the taxing power of the nation that issues them. But Europe is not yet a nation, and may never become one. The validity of the Euro depends on the IS, or the 19, taxing themselves as though they were a single country. It also depends on present systems of tax collection remaining viable in the electronic age. The Internet is moving into money transfers. The cost of Internet encryption software, which cannot be read by tax

authorities, has now fallen to \$120. And governments cannot tax transactions which they cannot identify.

Most of those who understand the developments in information technology expect there to be a deep, worldwide erosion of taxing capacity in the next ten years. Because the European nations have very high government expenditure, including welfare and pensions, they are more tax-dependent than Asian or North American countries. If the ability to tax and the willingness to be taxed are both in decline, and European social expenditures are still rising, the euro will not have the revenue base to support it. Already the convergence criteria have demonstrated that there is a budget problem throughout Europe.

The euro will never be one of the world's strong currencies, and it could be a currency disaster. It has too many problems, short-term and long-term. It will not enjoy particularly low interest rates, though there could be a period of initial optimism. Sterling is another weak currency, but if one is condemned to a leaky lifeboat, it is probably better to be in a little one than struggling for the tiller with other quarrelsome passengers in a big one. Whatever else the euro may be, it certainly will not be as good as gold.

Right out

ANDREW ROBERTS, right-wing historian, journalist and arch Euro-sceptic, is to be expelled from his local Conservative association for making favourable noises about the Referendum Party. Roberts has been a leading member of Kensington and Chelsea CA, the QEII of associations, for ten years.

"Anyone who knows me knows I am as Tory as Burke," a flabbergasted Roberts says from Bournemouth where he has been positioning himself near the conference hall clapperboard to applaud Euro-sceptic comments or references to the British Empire. "But now I have been told that the most senior source at Conservative Central Office wants me expelled." The most senior source, one presumes, is none other than Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman.

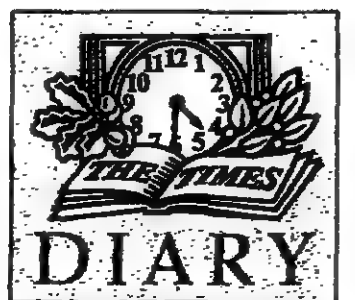
Roberts's crime was to write in *The Sunday Times* that when it came to choosing between Sir Nicholas Scott, the sitting MP and ardent Europhile, and Robin Birley, an old friend of Roberts and Referendum Party candidate in Kensington and Chelsea, he thought Birley

the better Tory. His preference for Birley, insists Roberts, does not mean that he would endorse the Referendum Party across the board. His protests may fall on deaf ears. Burke was a Whig.

● In Bournemouth defection stories are getting out of hand, the



"Hello, is that Max Clifford?"



latest being that the Tories will unveil a defector from Labour before the week is out. The MP in question is said to be close to Blair and according to senior Tories decided to defect without any wooing. Over on the Tories' other wing, meanwhile, there is talk of an imminent defection to the Referendum Party by one who is socially close to Lord McAlpine and intends to step down at the election.

Shirt story

THE PROSPECT of sitting at the dinner table in full view of Roy Hattersley's naked torso is an unedifying one. Such a fate befell guests at a dinner at the British Embassy in Washington, as Hat-

tersley himself shamelessly recalls in a new set of his memoirs which he is to read on Radio 4 next week.

"During dinner there had been a fierce argument between Henry Kissinger and the French Ambassador about swimming pools," the new champion of old Labour says. "The Ambassador had emphasised one of his points by wagging his fork in Henry's direction and covered the front of my shirt with kidney turpigo. When Nancy Kissinger saw what had happened she began to mop my chest with a damp napkin. My shirt turned transparent — revealing several spots, a few wisps of ginger hair and both nipples." Sounds very unpalatable.

Mode in Japan

FOLLOWING his appearance at the Royal Opera House's hard man in the television series *The House* last year, Keith Cooper's career goes from strength to strength. The strapping director of corporate affairs, who started receiving women's underwear through the post after his TV appearance, has been signed up by the Japanese label Yamamoto to model sunglasses and jackets. "The Japanese think I

am absolutely the man on the street," he says.

Maid to fit

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS has invaded Sherwood Forest. A Warner Brothers television series, *The New Adventures of Robin Hood*, has done away with Maid Marion. Robin's paramour, to be played by Anna Galvin, is to be known simply as Marion.

"There is no more Maid in Marion," the producers say. "She is



Cooper: cool customer

Robin's equal in every way. She is a ferocious fighter and will match any man with her sword, her whip, and her wit." Adding insult to injury, it is being shot in Lithuania.

Strike up

LAST night's party to celebrate the 10th birthday of *The Phantom of the Opera* looked certain to go with a swing. But only after last minute negotiations to avert industrial action. The orchestra complained that while every member of the cast, past and present, had been invited to join Andrew Lloyd Webber and producer Cameron Mackintosh at the Park Lane Hotel, some musicians, who had been scraping away in the pit for years, were not. The gala performance had been brought forward to 7pm but the musicians threatened to work to rule and turn up as usual at 7.45. Suddenly they found they were invited after all.

Watery tale

THE influence of Sarah Miles, actress and urine-drinker, seems to have infiltrated the fashion world. Tyra Banks, the leggy American



Tyra: bizarre

model, has been wittering on about how she deliberately memorises bizarre facts with which to astound and amaze her friends. "I'll learn something and bring it out at the weirdest moment... like did you know that it is better to drink your own urine rather than seawater?" she burbles.

P.H.S



IMPERMANENT POLICY

Clarke and Heseltine must soon face the inevitable

The Prime Minister and his Foreign Secretary have devised a line on the single currency that is guiding them through a turbulent week in Bournemouth. It is a line that can probably hold for the next few months as well. But they are deluding themselves if they believe that it can last until the general election and beyond.

The "wait and see" policy has merits beyond those outlined by John Major and Malcolm Rifkind yesterday. As well as giving Britain's voice greater weight at the European meetings that determine the machinery of the single currency, it also increases the prospect of this country forming alliances with others to delay or derail EMU. This is an advantage at which British politicians can only hint: if they admitted it outright, they would sabotage their own plans.

Mr Major's comments yesterday about the importance, even to the "out" countries, of EMU being a success lead naturally to the idea that Britain should play an active part in preventing a single currency from happening if it looks as if the convergence criteria are being fudged. Not so long ago, the British position was that, if other member states wanted to go ahead, this country should not obstruct them.

But, useful as this equivocal policy may have proved at the negotiating tables of Brussels, it can be no more than an interim measure. And it is not true to suggest, as both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary did yesterday, that if Britain ruled out joining the first wave of a single currency, it would have to leave the table. This country might have less influence on certain decisions about how the currency is run. But it would have just as much right to be heard on the big issues, since the "outs" will be seriously affected by the single currency too.

By next spring, the national interest in ruling out membership will be marginal: all the big decisions will have been taken. But the national interest in making a decision

will be huge. The most important issue facing voters at the next general election will be whether or not Britain should make this epic move of uniting itself economically to other countries. It is simply incredible that either party should by then profess itself to be agnostic, particularly since the new government will have to bring in legislation within months of winning office if it wants to join the first wave.

It is also impossible to conceive of a Conservative government (and probably even a Labour one) taking that momentous step. As this week in Bournemouth has shown, the vast majority of the party is viscerally opposed to the single currency. So are most Tory MPs; and their views are likely to be hardened by the new intake. Few in the present Cabinet would enthusiastically sign up to EMU.

Meanwhile, as poll after poll has shown, the country is overwhelmingly hostile to a single currency. In every other nation, bar one, that wants to join, voters are behind the project. They are willing, if a little reluctantly, to make sacrifices in pursuit of what they perceive to be a greater good. In Italy, they have even agreed to pay a special tax to meet the Maastricht criteria. Germany is the exception, but the sheer determination of Chancellor Kohl, and voters' desire for political union, may outweigh their sensibilities about giving up the mark.

It is hard to see any British Prime Minister being able to turn opinion in this country round in time to win a referendum and join in 1999. These are the realities that both Mr Major and Mr Blair must face. Most important, it is the reality that Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine must face. These two men are the obstacles to Mr Major setting out a sensible position for a fifth term. Whatever their personal wishes, they must be made to realise that Britain is simply not going to join EMU in 1999. They cannot be allowed to hold their party, its government and the national interest hostage.

RUSSIAN HEIR PRESUMPTIVE

Lebed has a rough and tangled maze to his goal

Aleksandr Lebed has returned from Nato to a chorus of recriminations in Moscow. Politicians, newspaper editorials and television commentators remarked acidly that he had failed to make clear Russia's opposition to Nato enlargement, that he preferred to impress his hosts than defend his country's interests and that he was seduced by the glitter and sparkle of his first visit to the West. The fact that the former general made a good impression in Brussels has only given an edge to such carping. The battle for Mr Yeltsin's succession has now begun in earnest. And the name of the game in Moscow is: get Lebed.

The charismatic secretary of Mr Yeltsin's Security Council is an outsider, a man who stormed his way to power by coming third in the presidential election in June. He has little understanding of politics, and little time for the niceties of democracy. With bluff military impatience, he believes there are urgent jobs to be done and these are being held up by the Byzantine intrigue that marks the shifting alliances in the Kremlin. Unlike the two other main contenders for Mr Yeltsin's job, Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, and Yuri Luzhkov, the powerful Mayor of Moscow, Mr Lebed has no inhibitions about declaring his hand. He has called on the President to step down. He has seized every chance to air his views. He has verged on rank disloyalty to the President and Government he serves.

Moscow's apparatchiks have closed ranks against him, dismissing his achievement in negotiating a Chechen ceasefire as a surrender. Their accusations are fuelled partly by jealousy — he succeeded where the

corrupt and incompetent former Defence Minister failed — and in part by reluctance to admit that Russia has been worsted. But as Mr Lebed writes on the opposite page today, Russians soldiers and mothers have saluted him while the political establishment has accused him of virtual betrayal. He asks what other solution the politicians propose, and with a clear undertone of menace promises to reveal the names of all those responsible for the slaughter in the first place.

His decision to put his case in *The Times* is a clear appeal for world backing as a way of outflanking those who would sabotage the Chechen deal in order to derail his ambitions. The West, however, will be as cautious of endorsing him as his Moscow rivals. For Mr Lebed is still an unknown quantity. Beyond the two vital issues where he can exploit his experience to embarrass the Government — the Chechen war and military reform — he has given little indication of his wider programme or philosophy. He is indiscriminate in his choice of allies and ambiguous even on such issues as Nato enlargement. He wants a snap election, before the glow of the Chechen deal fades. The Kremlin, under the sure hand of Anatoli Chubais, is playing a longer game, ready to employ the same campaign tactics for Mr Chernomyrdin that worked so successfully for Mr Yeltsin. As an outsider, Mr Lebed presents a challenge to entrenched interests that have already attempted to link him to corruption scandals. The gravel-voiced general may find the political terrain as rough as the military campaigns in Moldova and Chechnya.

LIVE POETS' SOCIETY

The royal road into English is by other men's verse

Today is National Poetry Day. Over Britain poetry is tuning up. Supermarkets offer service with a spondee, barmaids pull an anapest with their pints. Commuters curse traffic-jams in couplets and businessmen bargain in blank verse. The nation is a-swell with the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling — or insipid sentiment.

For those already initiated in the rhymers' art, the encouragement of amateur poets is simply a swing from bad to verse. Dionysian dabblers should not be indulged, some say. But the distinction between high and low culture has ever been blurred. Was it not rumoured in the sacred groves that Bob Dylan might be the recipient of a Nobel Prize this year? The context of poetry has never been a purely academic one.

Poetry is an integral part of our modern environment, from the lyrics of pop songs to a Christmas card's couplets, from the rhythms of rap to the jingles of a television advertisement. It is estimated that more than half the adults in Britain have attempted to pen poetry at some point in their lives. Their efforts should be applauded, not despised. Poetry, as Robert Frost once observed, is a way of taking life by the throat. Those who write it directly confront their most solemn ideas and most heartfelt emotions. In reading it many find contentment and solace, discovering an expression of shared ideas. In a world of increasing alienation, thronged with ever

more therapists, this is something to be encouraged, not shunned.

This year, National Poetry Day focuses particularly on the young. Poetry packs have been sent out to every school in the country in an attempt to encourage all schoolchildren to write, learn or perform a poem. To do this is to put them in touch with one of our most important national exports — the English language.

Poetry has famously been described as "the best words in the best order". To write it is to practise an elegance and a precision of expression, lamentably lacking in the modern world. To learn it is to carry in one's head one of our richest cultural resources. A poem learnt is a poem retained — its rhythms and cadences can inform and enrich one's own language throughout life. And in this soundbitten age, when time is one of our most valuable commodities, to read a poem is to enjoy a fullness of expression in one of its briefest and most concentrated forms.

In sponsorship of this year's National Poetry Day, the Forward Poetry Trust has joined forces with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Keats's poetry of the earth is, indeed, not yet dead. The WWF considers that the best way of developing environmental concern in children is to encourage them to explore the issue through verse. Our cultural environment is as integral to our well-being as our physical surroundings.

Wakeham warns on press excess

From Lord Wakeham, Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission

Sir, The events of the last few days (reports, October 8, 9) have thrown into sharp focus a matter that has been worrying me for some time. Although these events concern primarily members and former members of the Royal Family, the key issues they raise — invasion of privacy and the use of public-interest defence by newspapers — have wider ramifications.

The effectiveness of self-regulation depends on two factors: first, public credibility; second, sound editorial judgment about how any story relates to the letter and to the spirit of the industry's own Code of Practice. That effectiveness — which has been growing in stature — is now in danger of being undermined because a stream of invidious stories centred on the private lives of public individuals, backed up only by the flimsiest of public-interest defences, has beset a public which rightly asks why the Press Complaints Commission does not act to stop it.

The commission is an organisation which adjudicates on complaints only after thorough investigation. But first there has to be a complaint. Only then can the process begin. In a number of cases recently the people involved have chosen not to complain. Of particular concern in recent events must, of course, be the children of those involved: when a story breaks they are the first to suffer. I can understand — as could any parent — why, in these circumstances, those individuals are reluctant to complain and perhaps prolong the suffering through the investigation.

But this is unfortunate because it might lead some newspapers to believe that, simply because one of those involved in a story fails to complain, they have carte blanche to invade their privacy without any defence of public interest.

There are many issues arising from this — and they are not just for the press, but for public figures as well. They, too, should understand that we will always back accurate reporting whilst a genuine matter of public interest is at stake. And as I have said before, those who seek the limelight of publicity should always be prepared when its glare is returned, sometimes harshly.

In the light of my concerns, I believe we need now to examine all these issues carefully but urgently to see what lessons can be learned. In the meantime newspapers should beware that unjustified reporting of the private lives of public individuals will cast into doubt the system of self-regulation which has, in my view, achieved notable successes over the past few years. They should remember, too, that the PCC has powers to raise its own complaints when it needs to — and will not hesitate to use them.

Nobody would benefit from statutory controls — neither public, whose complaints we deal with (free of charge) in their hundreds every month, nor industry, which would find itself dragged into a perpetual quagmire of litigation.

I therefore trust all those who have an interest in these issues will co-operate with me and with the commission as we chart the way forward in strengthening self-regulation in this most difficult — but critical — of areas. I have always been the first to praise the industry which has made tremendous strides in the last few years in raising standards. I know they will rise to this new challenge.

Yours faithfully,
WAKEHAM, Chairman,
Press Complaints Commission,
1 Salisbury Square, EC4A,
October 9.

Battle of Towton

From Mr Geoffrey Richardson

Sir, I was most interested to read today of the discovery near Tadcaster of a mass grave from the Wars of the Roses. However, the Battle of Towton, which was fought on Palm Sunday of 1461, ended in complete victory for the Yorkist army, led by Edward IV, not "the Lancastrian forces", as stated. In addition, "the six-hour battle" described actually lasted for ten hours, with the pursuit of the defeated Lancastrians afterwards continuing through much of the night.

The location of the skeletons indicates that they are of fleeing survivors from the battle who were caught on route to the succour offered by the walls of York. The same sad fate befell many more of the Red Rose army along the Tadcaster road, which, according to contemporary reports, was "lined with the corpses of the slain".

Sincerely,
G. RICHARDSON (Author,
The Hollow Crowns, a history of the battles of the Wars of the Roses),
Rylands, Moorland Crescent,
Baldon, Shipley, West Yorkshire,
October 9.

Dim view

From Mr Alastair Cuthbertson

Sir, Recent touring holiday experience leads me to suspect a conspiracy among hoteliers to discourage clients from reading in bed. Why such inadequate bedside lighting?

Yours faithfully,
ALASTAIR CUTHBERTSON,
Applecross, Shooters Way Lane,
Berkhamsed, Hertfordshire.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Jack Straw's proposals for tackling drug-related crime

From Ms Jo Gardiner

Sir, The Labour Party's announcement of their proposal to conduct drug tests on some young criminals (report and leading article, October 4) sounds like a tough measure for a tough problem.

However, work done by the Industrial Society with young offenders prior to their release shows that they would like to see action taken earlier on the causes of crime.

These young men, many of them experienced criminals by the age of 17 and 18, almost without exception suggest one solution: the way to reduce crime is to compensate for the lack of stable families and communities, by providing children, from the age of 10, with challenging opportunities and safe environments where they can develop skills and positive attitudes. If young people don't turn to drugs they are far less likely to turn to crime.

Policymakers would do well to involve those with recent and direct experience when developing proposals to tackle crime.

Yours faithfully,
JO GARDINER
(Campaign Manager,
The Industrial Society,
48 Bryanston Square, W1,
October 4.

From Mr Danny Kuschlick

Sir, Your leading article, "Labour's test", criticises Jack Straw's plans for drug offenders for not addressing the supply side of the drugs market.

I have worked for a number of years with drug-using offenders on court orders and in prison. My experience is that those who want to make significant changes in their lives and to stop offending do so. Those who do not, continue to offend. Both groups do this regardless of the threat of imprisonment.

The significant factor in determining a desire to change is the recognition that there is something worth changing for — that there is some hope. Change cannot be enforced by

the criminal justice system, it comes from within. Most problematic drug use is related to unemployment, poverty and despair.

My conclusion is that the only way to produce significant change for users and non-users is to legalise all drugs. Problematic users offend in order to pay the high price of illicit drugs. The high price of drugs is determined by a demand-led market with a limited supply set by organised crime. Crime associated with the tobacco market is negligible even though most users are dependent addicts.

Politicians who talk about law and order should recognise that prohibition creates huge opportunities for organised crime. If they really want to reduce crime they should legalise and regulate the drugs market at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,
DANNY KUSHLICK
(Co-ordinator,
Traction
(The campaign to transform
drug policy and legislation),
Box 59, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS1,
October 4.

From the Chief Executive of the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse

Sir, Your leading article says Jack Straw's proposals to test and treat criminals likely to be drug abusers have merit, but also rightly says that practical solutions to tackle drug misuse have proved elusive.

What really bedevils such work at national and local level is the lack of investment in new resources, or the lack of will to redirect existing resources from the criminal justice system to treatment programmes. This, as you say, would cut crime.

There is a way forward though. Only last week Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, in a report on local police drug strategies, raised the possibility of redirecting the proceeds of seized assets into under-resourced treatment and rehabilitation services. The Home Office Police Research Group and the National Audit Office

have also suggested that more could and should be done to maximise asset seizures.

What would be heartening would be to hear a commitment from the Treasury teams of all political parties that more will be done to confiscate assets and put the proceeds into prevention and treatment programmes. That would be real progress.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER HOWARD,
Chief Executive,
Standing Conference on Drug Abuse,
32-36 Loman Street, SE1,
October 7.

From the Chair of the Penal Affairs Consortium

Sir, While supporting the Shadow Home Secretary's advocacy of court-ordered treatment for drug-addicted offenders, your leading article criticises Labour's opposition to Michael Howard's proposals "to introduce minimum sentences for professional drug dealers".

However, the Home Secretary's proposed seven-year minimum sentences for repeat drug dealers would apply not only to professional suppliers but also to addicts selling small amounts to friends to finance their own drug habit. Many of them are exactly the sort of offender for whom court-ordered drug treatment can succeed; yet minimum sentences would prohibit courts from using this humane and cost-effective option.

Minimum prison terms could also damage intelligence-gathering into drug-trafficking operations. Small-scale user-dealers would have less incentive to co-operate in helping the police to build a case against major traffickers if a seven-year minimum sentence prevented courts from reflecting this co-operation in a reduced sentence.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL CAVADINO, Chair,
Penal Affairs Consortium,
169 Clapham Road, SW9,
October 4.

Defining sleaze in modern politics

From Mr David Butler

Sir, There are occasions when the House of Commons can do most for its own authority by abjuring its powers. The key step in curing the Eastons will elections of the 19th century was the 1870 Act which transferred jurisdiction over controversial elections from a select committee to the High Court.

The House thereby escaped the widespread suspicion of collusive fixing and the courts speedily established rules and standards about corrupt electioneering which became generally accepted. Could not the House consider this example in dealing with its current ethical problems (letters, October 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)?

Yours,
DAVID BUTLER,
Nuffield College, Oxford,
October 8.

From Mr R. H. Keys

Sir, Mr G. E. Taylor (letter, October 7) describes Ian Greer Associates disparagingly as "serving whoever pays them the most".

A more accurate and less inflammatory analogy would be with lawyers. They too will fight for any client who pays them. They too "rarely pretend to

support... clients out of conviction". That is their value. At their best they do well a job that they are paid to do. Few of us believe that there is anything discreditable about this.

The position of parliamentary lobbyists is exactly the same and there is no reason why Lady Turner should feel ashamed of her connection with them.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT KEYS,
11 Finchley Avenue,
Chelmsford, Essex.

From Mr Ian McGaw

Sir, I had the privilege to be the Conservative candidate at St Helens in the 1970 general election. When the election was announced I — and I expect every other candidate — received a letter from a well known shoemaker offering a pair of their shoes to help us in the miles that we were going to cover during the campaign.

My agent advised that I could not accept the offer as it might prejudice my future independence.

Yours faithfully,
IAN MCGAW,
6 Laud's Close,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire,
October 9.

From Mr Jonathan Carey

Sir, As a former pupil of one of the consistently top schools, I feel a sense of pride each year when my old school again achieves one of the leading positions in the A-level tables.

However, as parents, my wife and I find these tables totally irrelevant. What we are interested in is how schools prepare their pupils for later life.

It is no good being top of the tables, if five years later the pupils responsible are addicted to drugs, burnt out or have under-achieved at university. What to us would be meaningful and helpful would be tables (by school) showing what former pupils were doing ten years after leaving, giving an insight into their employment and social status.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN CAREY,
Kites, Frith End,
Bordon, Hampshire,
October 5.

All in the family

From Canon Simon Bloxam-Rose

Sir, Far from being a politically correct term favoured by new Labour as Mr John Payne suggests (letter, October 8), the expression "wife's mother" has an excellent pedigree.

The translators of the Authorised Version of the Bible in 1611 (following Tyndale) used it to describe the mother-in-law of St Peter (Mark 1, 30).

I remain etc.
SIMON BLOXAM-ROSE
(Senior Chaplain, Millfield School),
Orchard Leigh,
Butleigh Road, Street, Somerset,
October 8.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

Eustace Roskill

From Mr Muir Hunter, QC

Sir, Your splendid obituary of Eustace Roskill (October 8) pays tribute to his kindness to the Bar. May I give an example?

Just after starting a long case before him I was struck down with a septic throat. On my clerk informing him that I should be a little late for court, he telephoned me in bed, ordering me not to return until I was better. "You have a perfectly adequate junior to read the paper and the books meanwhile," he said. "I once came back to court before I had recovered, and it did me much harm." We are indeed fortunate to have such judges.

Your obedient servant,
MUIR HUNTER,
3/4 South Square, Gray's Inn, WC1,
October 8.

Bones of contention

From Dr B. S. Smith

Sir, It is sad to see on your front page today (later editions), and repeated in Sport, a reference to a footballer with a broken right leg and a fracture in his left leg.

There is, of course, no difference between a broken bone and a fractured bone. Fracture is the preferred term medically and implies no qualitative or quantitative information other than that the bone is broken.

Yours faithfully,
B. S. SMITH
(Consultant physician),
Sandwell Healthcare, Lyndon,
West Bromwich, West Midlands,
October 7.

Testing times

From Dr K. T. H. Farrer

Sir, In recalling famous innings at Headingley (Yorkshire to move home), Sport, October 8, would it be rude to remind Englishmen that, pace Botham, Willis and the rest, this is also the ground on which D. G. Bradman, on July 11, 1930, made 105 before lunch, added 115 between lunch and tea, and a further 89 before close of play?

Yours sincerely,
K. T. H. FARRER,
Glen Ebor, 24 Rosemoor Grove,
Chandler's Ford, Hampshire.

Conserving antiquity

From Dr Andrew Bamji

Sir, Historic archaeological sites have always suffered at the hands of careless tourists (letters, October 4).

The great gateway to Persepolis is defaced by extensive graffiti. One stone bears the inscription, within a lozenge, "Stanley, New York Herald, 1870".

A little distance from this a later vandal has written "Col. Malcolm Meade, HM Consul General, 1896", beneath which a less precise hand has added "8 Mrs Meade".

With such examples, what hope can there be for Pompeii?

Yours dispiritedly,
ANDREW BAMJI,
58 Godington Lane,
Orpington, Kent
October 4.

THE TIMES

2

INSIDE SECTION

2 TODAY



ARTS

The sheriff's a star: Chris Cooper in the week's best film
PAGES 33-35



TRAVEL

Tourist explosion as Icelandic volcano erupts
PAGES 38, 39



SPORT

Hill prepares for decisive closing chapter of season
PAGES 42-48

TELEVISION AND RADIO
PAGES 46, 47

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY OCTOBER 10 1996

Call to disclose political gifts

By JANIN NISSE

INSTITUTIONAL investors are calling for full disclosure of US donations by British companies and, in some cases, for the decision to give donations to be put to a vote in the wake of yesterday's revelations by *The Times*.

Investigations in the US have unearthed \$2.1 million of donations by FT-SE 100 companies to Bob Dole, the Republican candidate for the US presidency, and the Republican Party.

Total payments to American political causes were \$3.5 million, more than twice the amount given to UK parties.

Most companies do not disclose the full extent of their US donations in their annual reports and do not put the matter to a vote.

The Association of British Insurers is now to press for all companies to fully disclose their donations in the US and other countries.

Richard Regan, investment director of the ABI, said: "Our membership think it is very important the political donations should be transparent."

The Prudential, one of the UK's largest institutional investors, is understood to want all political donations, whatever the country involved, to be put to a vote of shareholders.

The National Association of Pension Funds already requires companies to disclose all donations, which includes US payments, so some FT-SE 100 companies may be in breach of those guidelines.

Hermes, the Post Office and Telecom pension fund, opposes all donations to UK political parties, and is considering whether to extend this policy further.



Overbearing attitudes among officials, causing frustration and fear, are cited by Elizabeth Filkin, who says complaints are up by 27 per cent

Homes slowdown fuels Clarke stance on rates

By JANET BUSH AND ANNE ASHWORTH

KENNETH CLARKE, the Chancellor, has continued to ignore the warnings from the Bank of England that interest rates should be raised.

Minutes from last month's monetary meeting published yesterday show the Chancellor arguing that prices data remained extremely good, that sterling had strengthened since the last meeting and that "there was certainly no sign of any housing market boom".

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England said at the meeting that the longer a rate rise was delayed the sharper it would need to be. He said that growing domestic demand put the Government's inflation target at "significant risk".

However, he said the short-term outlook for inflation remained favourable.

The publication of the minutes coincided with the publication of the Halifax Building Society's regional house price survey, which showed a year-on-year improvement in house prices in the third quarter of 5.4 per cent.

However, during the three months to September, prices rose by just 0.8 per cent, a significant slowdown from the 2.2 per cent recorded in the second quarter.

This fall reflected declines in some areas, such as the West Midlands, and reinforced the Chancellor's scepticism about the existence of a housing boom. In yesterday's minutes, Mr Clarke expressed the view that price increases were concentrated in particular sections of the market where there were property shortages.

The Governor and the Chancellor mentioned the appreciation in the exchange rate as a positive factor controlling inflation in the near-term.

Jonathan Loyes of HSBC Markets noted that the pound's trade-weighted index had risen by 1.5 per cent since the September meeting, "allowing Mr Clarke to claim that Mr George has had the '4-point monetary tightening he was after'".

On balance, the City believes that it is becoming more likely that the Chancellor will get away with keeping base rates where they are right up until the election.

Looking to future trends in the housing market, Gary

Marsh, assistant general manager at the Halifax, said that he believed the current wide gaps between price performance in different regions would not widen further.

According to the Halifax survey, prices continued to rise most rapidly in Greater London, where there has been a 10.1 per cent increase over the year. However, the pace of growth slowed in the third quarter to 1.1 per cent, against 3 per cent and 5.6 per cent in the two previous quarters, increases which the Halifax described as "unsustainable".

The average price of a detached house in the capital is now £204,006. The yearly rate of inflation in the South East was 5.8 per cent, but the quarter's increase of 1.1 per cent was again down

on the figure for the previous quarters. Northern Ireland and Wales also performed well, with rises over the quarter of 1.1 per cent and 1.6 per cent. Since 1995, prices in Northern Ireland have soared by 18.5 per cent, taking the average prices for a detached house to £87,271.

Elsewhere, the Halifax figures tell a different tale. In the West Midlands prices were down by 0.6 per cent and East Anglian properties were down 0.2 per cent. Prices held steady in Yorkshire and Humberside. In the North West, where prices fell badly last year, there has been a 3.6 per cent rise over the past 12 months and a 1.4 per cent rise during the quarter.

Pennington, page 27

Tax and Customs staff criticised

By MARIANNE CURRIE

TAXMEN stand accused of "incompetence, insensitivity and indifference", while Customs officials are often overbearing and heavy-handed when questioning travellers, an independent watchdog body claims.

A report published yesterday into the way the Inland Revenue handles disputes with customers has officially confirmed what many taxpayers know already: that complaining to the tax office can be a frustrating, time-consuming and frightening business.

Taxpayers have faced huge bills, been caused unnecessary work, and suffered frustration and fear because of the Revenue's attitude, according to the independent financial adjudicator, Elizabeth Filkin.

In her third annual report, she has made unusually strong criticism of officials who failed to acknowledge their mistakes.

She revealed that the Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise and the Contributions Agency paid a total of £109,000 to 102 people who complained about their treatment this year. The largest payment was £28,490 after the Revenue improperly conducted an investigation of a small business.

Among those who suffered at the hands of officials was a man strip-searched by a Customs officer at an airport, and a man involved in the construction industry who was wrongly suspected of failing to declare all his income.

Ms Filkin revealed that 3,267 people complained to her office this year, 27 per cent up on the previous year. She took up 577 complaints for full investigation and found wholly or partly in favour of the complainant in half of the cases.

Some Customs and Excise staff acted in an overbearing way and routine procedures were operated in a heavy-handed manner, she said.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	4008.3	(-28.3)
Yield	3.88%	
FTSE All share	1969.07	(-9.75)
Nikkei	20670.83	(-167.70)
New York		
Dow Jones	8944.78	(-21.59)
S&P Composite	898.39	(-2.25)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(4 1/4%)
Long Bond	9 3/4%	(9 3/4%)
Yield	6.79%	(6.80%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Libor long gilt	11 1/4%	(11 1/4%)

STERLING		
New York	1.5843	(1.5835)
London	1.5858	(1.5852)
DM	2.3913	(2.3879)
FF	1.0833	(1.0834)
Sfr	1.5528	(1.5541)
Yen	174.32	(173.55)
£ index	87.1	(86.8)

US DOLLAR		
London	1.5290	(1.5294)
DM	6.1680	(6.1670)
Sfr	1.2520	(1.2540)
Yen	111.25	(111.80)
£ index	87.4	(87.2)

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brut 15-day Dec	824.06	(824.15)
GOLD		
London close	831.45	(831.15)

* denotes midday trading price

Few tax cuts

The case for tax cuts in next month's Budget is weak, with any hope of returning the public finances to balance in the medium term dependent on unprecedentedly tight control of public spending, according to the budget published jointly yesterday by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and Goldman Sachs. Page 26

Inchcape sale

Inchcape has sold its Testing Services business to Charterhouse Development Capital for £380 million. The proceeds will go towards clearing Inchcape's £488 million borrowings. Page 27

Branson expands Virgin empire

By FRASER NELSON

RICHARD BRANSON is expanding his Virgin empire into jeans and cosmetics via a joint venture with Victory Holdings, a start-up company that will float on the Alternative Investment Market next week for £110 million.

Victory will be the fifth largest company on AIM. It has raised £45 million from the placing — the largest new issue on the exchange. With Virgin, it will jointly own Jeans Co and Cosmetics Co, two separate companies scheduled to start trading by next Christmas.

Virgin will have a 10.6 per cent stake in Victory, worth £11.6 million, in exchange for the use of its logo. Rory McCarthy, Victory's chairman, has invested £3 million

of his personal fortune for a 2.6 per cent stake. Mr McCarthy, a long-standing friend of Mr Branson, has been named as the third crew member of Virgin's round-the-world hot air balloon trip in December. He also runs McCarthy Corporation, a Toronto-listed conglomerate that plans to list on AIM later this year.

Mr McCarthy said: "We had a difficult job as a start-up because we had to buy our investors' imagination. The confidence they have shown gives some reflection of the strength of the Virgin brand." Société Générale Strauss-Turnbull has placed 72.4 million Victory shares at 58p each. They start trading next Thursday.

Tempus, page 28

Tottenham writes down squad value

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR, the quoted Premiership football club, will today reveal that it has written down the value of its playing squad by more than 40 per cent (Jason Nisse writes).

Alan Sugar, chairman, is expected to announce that the value of the squad is being cut by £6.8 million and the reduction will be written off against profits.

The move, which means that a team including England Euro 96 stars Darren Anderton and Teddy Sheringham is valued at just £9 million, has been prompted by the European Court ruling in the case of Jean-Marc Bosman, the Belgian footballer. The ruling means that players out of contract can move to another club within the European Community with no transfer fee payable.

Rover plant waits on £60m subsidy

By OLIVER AUGUST

ROVER, the BMW subsidiary, is close to securing a government subsidy of around £60 million to build an engine plant in the Midlands.

The £500 million investment by the company would create 2,000 jobs which may otherwise go to Austria, where BMW already has a high-tech plant. The facility is to be built at Hams Hall between Coventry and Birmingham.

Rover is hoping to build 400,000 engines a year in the next decade. But if the plant is not built because the subsidy is too small, Britain could lose all engine building capacity when current Rover plants are taken out of production.

Walter Hasselkus, Rover's German chief executive, has

met with Department of Trade and Industry officials. He said: "I am confident we will get it, but it has to be a subsidy that will make it commercially viable to build the plant."

The Austrian government is understood to be offering up to £70 million. Rover is resigned to the fact that the DTI grant will be smaller but said it will have to be relatively close to the Vienna figure.

Next week Rover faces difficult pay negotiations with the Transport and General Workers Union, which is demanding a 7 per cent wage increase. Mr Hasselkus said: "7 per cent is just not on. We are fighting to become profitable, and that excludes a 7 per cent increase."

Pennington, page 27

Tebbit reveals evidence of age concern

By JON ASHWORTH

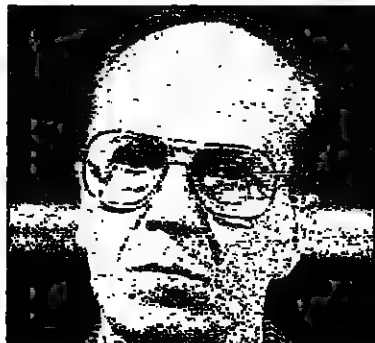
LORD TEBBIT, who once told the unemployed to get on their bikes and find work, admitted at the High Court in London yesterday that the odds were stacked against UK executives over the age of 55.

The former Conservative Party chairman had taken leave from the Conservative Party conference to give evidence in the case of John Clark, who was ousted as chief executive of BET, the business services group, after the takeover bid by Rentokil this year.

Pressed on the likelihood of Mr Clark securing another job, Lord Tebbit said: "It isn't fashionable these days to appoint chief executives who are in their upper 50s." Lord Tebbit was a non-executive director of BET until May, and chaired the company's remuneration committee.



Clark seeks £6m compensation



Tebbit odds against over-55s

obtain employment", suggested that Mr Clark would seem to be highly employable. Lord Tebbit replied: "He is 55 years old and unfortunately there is a cult of ageism in this country." He added: "I suffer myself, being 65."

Another barrier in Mr Clark's way was that many extremely able chief executives were not suitable for positions in other companies. "There are some very good square pegs and some very good round holes," he said.

Mr Clark, an American, helped to revive the fortunes of BET before it was acquired by Rentokil for £2.2 billion in April. He is claiming more than £6 million for loss of salary, pension rights, stock and share options, bonus payments, an executive car and chauffeur and health insurance. BET admits wrongful dismissal and agrees it must pay compensation but disputes the amounts. The case continues.

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Goldcrest clear-up 'became cover-up'

A FORMER director of Goldcrest, the Brent Walker film and television subsidiary, has told a London court of his "distress" at the state of the company's accounts (Robert Miller writes).

Frederick Fisher told Southwark Crown Court yesterday that a massive cover-up, allegedly sanctioned by George Walker, former head of Brent Walker, reminded him of the Watergate scandal.

Mr Fisher added that he had spoken to Donald Anderson, the former finance director of Goldcrest, of his concerns. He said he was "distressed and breathless" by what he had heard from Mr Anderson, adding that the situation reminded him of former American president Richard Nixon's fall from office.

He also said that what appeared to start out as a "clearing-up exercise" had "gone beyond that to a cover-up".

The former Goldcrest director was giving evidence against Mr Anderson who has denied a single charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice between August 1989 and October 1990. The case continues.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	8.07	1.81
Austria Sch	17.78	16.29
Belgium Fr	1.18	47.79
Canada \$	2.22	2.02
Cyprus Cyp	0.781	0.783
Denmark Kr	8.12	8.12
Finland Mk	7.70	7.08
France Fr	8.48	7.81
Germany Dr	2.84	2.35
Greece Dr	380	385
Hong Kong \$	12.72	11.72
Ireland P	1.18	0.85
Israel Sh	5.27	4.72
Italy Lit	2478	2282
Japan Yen	168.20	172.20
Malta	0.028	0.028
Netherlands Gld	2.690	2.690
New Zealand \$	2.41	2.19
Norway Kr	10.70	9.50
Portugal Esc	203.00	204.50
S Africa Rd	7.27	6.87
Spain Ptas	207.00	194.00
Sweden Kr	10.70	9.50
Switzerland Fr	2.08	1.90
Turkey Lira	1404.00	1404.00
USA \$	1.661	1.631

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



Ann Gloag, director, and Brian Souter, chairman of Stagecoach, can now proceed with investment programme

Green Budget says case for £3bn tax cuts is weak

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE case for tax cuts in next month's Budget is weak, with any hope of returning the public finances to balance in the medium term relying on unprecedentedly tight control of public spending, according to the Green Budget published jointly yesterday by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and Goldman Sachs.

"Were such control to be achieved, tax reductions might be justifiable in the future," the report said. "To cut taxes now in the expectation of hitting these medium-term spending plans would be dangerous."

In spite of its warnings, the Green Budget believes Kenneth Clarke will cut taxes to the tune of £3 billion, with broadly the same amount being cut from nominal spending plans for the 1997-98 financial year.

Gavin Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs, said that this Budget would be extraordinarily similar to last year's. "It is not the tax-cutting Budget the right of the Conservative Party wants to see. It is realistically the smallest tax-

cutting package the Chancellor can get away with in an election year," he said.

The report predicts that Mr Clarke will show the public sector borrowing requirement dropping to £21.7 billion in 1997-98 and to broad budget balance by 1999-2000, a path of deficit reduction that the authors judge would be broadly acceptable. The PSBR for the current fiscal year is expected to be £26.2 billion, well above the £22.4 billion assumed in the last Budget.

Mr Davies said that modest tax cuts and matching spending cuts would aim to make the fiscal situation no worse. "This is quite a brave thing for Ken Clarke to do but he shouldn't be cutting taxes at all," he said.

The Green Budget makes it clear that tax cuts — even small ones — would be inappropriate at a time when consumer spending is expected to be boosted by £18 billion of windfall gains from building society mergers, for exam-

ple. The report also noted that the most likely source of spending cuts would be in capital investment. Thus, there would be an unwelcome shift away from investment and towards the consumer.

The report concludes that it will not be too difficult to contain public spending in the short-term. But in the longer-term there are real concerns about maintaining control on spending — without services such as health and education suffering.

British Energy to shed 1,460 jobs

By ERIC REGULY

BRITISH ENERGY, the privatised nuclear-power generator, confirmed plans to shed 1,460 employees, almost 30 per cent of the workforce, over the next three years in an effort to cut annual costs by £50 million.

The unions called the job losses "a kick in the face" but expressed relief that no power stations or main offices would be closed.

About 1,200 of the jobs will disappear at Nuclear Electric, the larger English division, with six stations. Scottish Nuclear, with two stations, will see 260 job losses. British Energy said it did not expect any compulsory redundancies but would not rule them out.

The redundancy programme will result in the loss of 35 per cent of British Energy's office support staff, and 19 per

cent of the stations' staff. A £100 million redundancy charge will be taken over three years.

The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate said it will review the job cuts and block them if it determines they would compromise safety standards. The Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union said it would ask Nuclear Electric to justify every job reduction.

Stagecoach completes purchase financing shake-up

By PAUL DURMAN

STAGECOACH, the bus and train-operating company, has completed the innovative re-financing of its controversial acquisition of Porterbrook, the train-leasing company.

The company has parcelled up the rental income Porterbrook receives from leasing out its rolling stock into £545 million of debt securities. UBS, the investment bank, yesterday placed these securities, most of which carry a triple A rating, to a wide range of European investors. Keith Ballantine, an assistant director at UBS, said the placing had gone "extremely well indeed".

UBS believes the Porterbrook deal is the first UK acquisition financed by securitisation of the acquired assets. The securitisation fixes Stagecoach's interest costs at a reduced level and will throw up a £25 million surplus through early repayment of a £520 million bridging loan from UBS.

Keith Cochrane, Stagecoach finance director, said the £25 million surplus — more than was expected when the Porterbrook deal was announced at the end of July — would give a kick-start to the company's investment programme. Stagecoach intends to order 120 new trains, costing £90 million, for its South West Trains franchise.

The average cost of the £545 million of borrowings will be 7.4 per cent, after expenses. Mr Cochrane said Porterbrook had previously been paying about 8 per cent.

Although the debt will appear on Stagecoach's balance sheet, the company is not required to make up any shortfall in the interest payments made to bondholders should rental income prove insufficient because of the failure of any of the train-operating companies. In fact, 90 per cent of Porterbrook's revenues are guaranteed by the Government.

Stagecoach is still awaiting the Office of Fair Trading's verdict on the Porterbrook acquisition.

Temps, page 28

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Tunnel shares fall on debt deal fears

SHARES of Eurotunnel fell yesterday, touching a low of 89p, as doubts about the company's debt-restructuring deal with its banks prompted heavy selling in both London and Paris. A total of 2.48 million shares were traded in London, where the stock ended the day at 93½p, down 11½p. The shares resumed trading on Monday after being suspended while the company negotiated the refinancing of £8.7 billion of debt.

UBS, the broker, reiterated its sell stance, warning that the tunnel operator would continue to be substantially cash-negative well into the next decade. Richard Hannah, the UBS analyst, said he believed the shares "are seriously overvalued." He said: "The swap of debt to equity doesn't really look big enough to be a proper long-term refinancing." UBS calculates that the total net present value of the cash stream from Eurotunnel's remaining 52-year tunnel-operating concession at below £6 billion, well short of the remaining debt after the deal. The restructuring deal has still to be approved by Eurotunnel shareholders and also has to be ratified by the 225 members of the banking syndicate.

Sony's new film team

SONY CORPORATION has appointed a new management team at its Hollywood film subsidiary in an attempt to staunch the multibillion-dollar losses and executive turmoil that have plagued the company. John Calley, head of United Artists and a respected Hollywood veteran, has joined Sony Pictures as president and chief executive. He has produced several hit films such as *Birds* and *Goldeneye*, the latest James Bond. Mr Calley replaces Alan Levine, who resigned last week. At 66 he will be widely regarded as an interim manager.

Allders EGM vote call

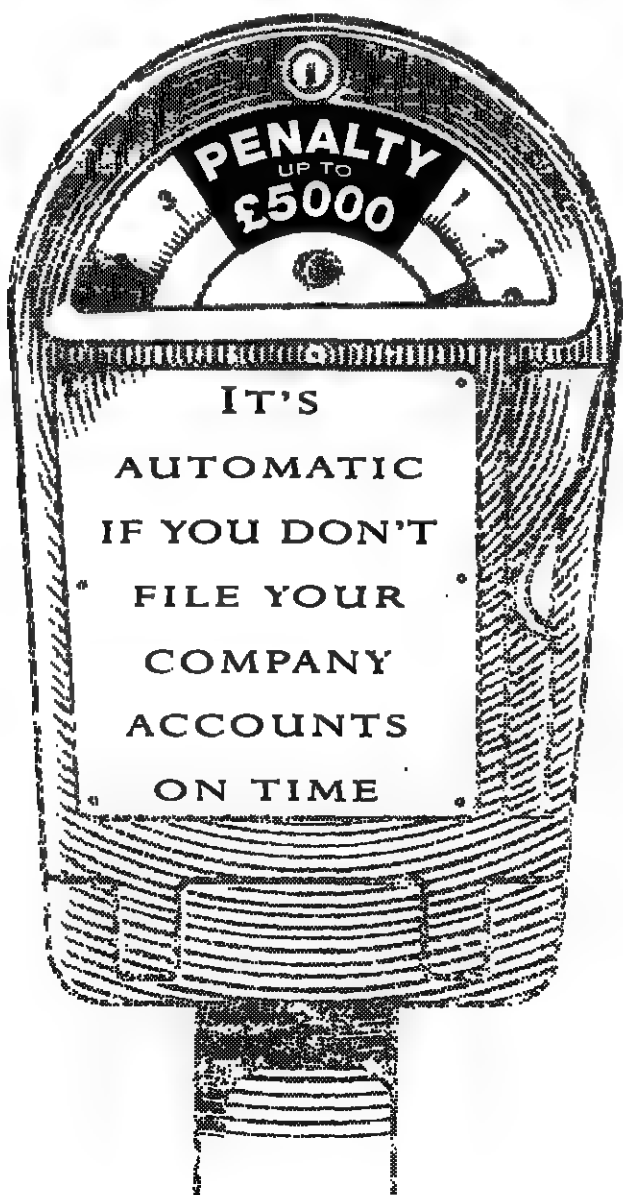
ALLDERS, the department stores operator, is advising shareholders to vote against resolutions relating to a share capital consolidation at today's extraordinary meeting. Instead, the Allders board intends to propose the payment of a special dividend of 46p a share, as a second interim dividend, at a cost of about £50 million. The recommendation follows Tuesday's statement by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, proposing a crackdown on tax breaks for special dividends. The shares rose 2½p to 158p yesterday.

News Corp Web site

THE News Corporation, owner of *The Times*, yesterday announced the launch of the News Corp site on the Internet. The address is <http://www.newsincorp.com> and the site consists of an interactive version of the 1996 News Corp annual report. Visitors to the site will be able to download audio and video clip examples of various News Corp products. The site also provides for direct links to the Internet sites of News Corp companies. In the near future the site will be expanded to include press releases and investor information.

Equitas appointment

SIR BRYAN NICHOLSON, former president of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), has been appointed a non-executive director of Equitas, the company set up to reinsure Lloyd's of London losses for 1992 and prior years. He is joined on the board by Michael Denny, the veteran Lloyd's campaigner, who steps down as an external member of the Council of Lloyd's next March. In two further non-executive appointments, Richard Spooner and Stephen Catlin both join the Equitas board.



If you're a director of a limited company, you should know that you only have a certain amount of time from your Accounting Reference Date to deliver your accounts to Companies House.

But what you may not realise is that if you deliver your accounts late your company will be penalised — automatically. Delay too long and the penalty could be as much as £1000 for private limited companies and £5000 for PLCs.

What's more, ensuring that your accounts are delivered on time is the personal responsibility of the company's directors. Not just your finance director. And certainly not your accountant.

Filing on time makes sound business sense. Other companies may soon lose confidence in yours if your records aren't up to date.

Examples of some deadlines for existing private limited companies are shown below:

Company Accounting Reference Date	Deadline for delivery to Companies House (Private companies)
31 December 1995	31 October 1996
31 January 1996	31 November 1996
29 February 1996	28 December 1996

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CHANGING TIMES

□ Clarke and Halifax in accord □ Lloyds bid inches nearer □ Ginger group threatens the Norwich

Playing safe with houses

□ DON'T say it too loud in today's overheated housing market or you could start a stampede, but we might have found an honest estate agent. The Halifax says that far from a housing boom, what we have is a mild recovery. How fortuitous that this coincided with a similar line from Kenneth Clarke.

And how telling that the Chancellor's views are no more, and possibly less, reliable than those of an estate agent. The Halifax could well have run out another of those ra-ra, buy-now-or-regret-it-forever notes we saw in the spring, when a profession that had heralded several false dawns saw a glint of the real thing. Instead it provided a more measured response suggesting a gradual improvement, off the peaks achieved in the summer and limited to areas where people actually want to live and where there is an under-supply of available homes.

The builders, much of whose product is situated in the wrong areas because these are the only places they can buy developable land, have been saying this for months: this autumn's reporting season for the industry was not noted for its bullishness.

Whereas Eddie George talked of continuing steady housing market recovery, a consequent spill-over into higher consumer spending and a tumbler that was

half full, the Chancellor could see only a half-empty glass. The truth is that any gradual increase in house prices encourages people to put their homes on the market, so dampening down prices again as supply matches demand. Expect, therefore, a series of slow, staggered price increases.

This is probably all to the good. Mr Clarke has his own reason to talk the market down: sharply higher house prices would put upwards pressure on interest rates. Neither he nor the homeowner want that; there is no point in the value of your property rocketing if you face eviction because you cannot pay the mortgage. You can have negative equity and cheap mortgages; you can have soaring house prices and pay the cost.

Keep taking the tablets

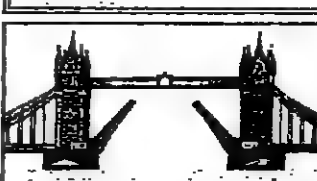
□ THE endlessly deferred bids for Lloyds Chemists have become the stock market's longest-running production. Whenever the curtain threatens to fall, there

is always one more act to follow. It is now nine months since Gehe, of Germany, and UniChem first bid for Lloyds, the country's biggest chain of retail chemists after Boots, and the drama is fast becoming a farce. At least one player has already left the stage. The wife of Allen Lloyd, founder and chairman, sold out in May at 450p a share, well below the market price. She may have lost out, given the respective performance of the shares and the market, but she has bought some peace of mind.

The bids were duly referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. In July Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said they should be blocked, unless the two bidders were prepared to sell off odd bits. So far, so orthodox — it is normal policy to forbid a merger unless the parties are prepared to make it slightly less attractive, *vide* Bass's purchase of Carlsberg-Tetley now jumping through the same hoop.

But the conditions put on Gehe and UniChem were so slight that it is hard to see how they justify the three-month delay while they

PENNINGTON



were agreed with the Office of Fair Trading. The Germans were to sell seven wholesale depots, the British six. UniChem would probably have sold or closed these anyway; the two were hardly being required to saw off their right arms, and agreement in principle was swift. They were each required to submit a list of potential buyers — nothing binding, of course; as neither owned the business, they could hardly promise a sale — by next Friday.

The two lists went to the OFT a couple of weeks ago. End of debate, one would have thought. But the October 18 deadline must roll round in all its awful majesty and Mr Lang must then give his decision. How long that will

take, none can say. The significance is the effect on Lloyds' business of nine months of uncertainty and counting. Lloyds has issued a warning on trading, and yesterday's figures contained further indications of damage from the delay. Some scepticism is appropriate; the temptation must have been to blame every setback on the competition authorities.

Meanwhile, Gehe has indicated that it thinks that Lloyds is now worth less than it initially bid. Again, some scepticism is due. UniChem's pronouncements have been more vague, but it seems to regard the benefits of merging Lloyds with its existing business as so attractive that the wait is worth the candle.

But the renewed offers, if they come, are not expected to be at much higher than the current market price, or around the £5 level at which they were pitched at the start of the year. The FT-SE 100 index has risen by 7 per cent since the bids were referred. Lloyds shareholders have missed out on this, and all for a few barely profitable pharmaceutical depots no one

seems to much want anyway. Truly do the mills of the competition authorities grind small — and exceedingly slowly.

State of the Union

□ ON THE basis that you can never please everyone all the time, the formation of a ginger group to chivy the Norwich Union as it heads for flotation was inevitable. The complaints are coming from those "unlucky" enough to have policies that mature between October 1, when the insurer confirmed it was to go public, and the vote on this next spring.

The claim is that these individuals are losing out. Once their policies mature, they cease to be members of Norwich Union and their voting rights evaporate. They will, therefore, be ineligible for the windfall free shares promised to those who will vote. Yet the Norwich is doing its best to compensate them for any unfairness, real or supposed. They will gain a bonus of an extra 3 per cent on the value of

those policies at maturity. If they wish to sell those policies beforehand, the buyer gets the bonus, so this is reflected in the price they receive.

The Norwich is moving fast towards a stock market quote to limit the number of such hard cases. But there will always be some who lose out because of the timing of any announcement. This may be bad luck, but it is not unfair.

Norwich members are receiving those free shares to compensate them for losing their vote, and a say in the insurer's future. It follows that those who have or will have lost that right before the vote do not need compensating. If the ginger group complains too vociferously, the true owners of the cash promised to keep them sweet, the members as a whole, may have something to say.

Floating vote

□ MINISTERS may, at last, have struck a hard bargain with inward investors, and delegates at Bournemouth this week should approve. On Tuesday it was £150 million for 2,000 jobs in Fife; yesterday it was £60 million for the same number between Coventry and Birmingham. Not only is the cost per job falling, there is still the odd undecided voter left in the Midlands.

Inchcape sells off testing business to Charterhouse

By PAUL DURMAN

INCHCAPE has sold its Testing Services business to Charterhouse Development Capital for about £380 million.

Proceeds from the sale will go towards clearing the £488 million of borrowings at Inchcape, the recently troubled motor distribution group that is offloading the testing business as part of its recovery strategy.

Testing Services, which tests petroleum and electrical equipment, has been one of Inchcape's best performers, recently reporting a 37 per cent rise in first-half operating

profits to £15.7 million. The management of Testing Services, headed by Richard Nelson, 53, is putting up more than £1 million for a stake of up to 16 per cent.

Charterhouse believes that it will be possible to float the business on the stock market within the next three years.

Charterhouse scored a hugely profitable coup for its backers this year when it sold Porterbrook, the train-leasing company, to Stagecoach, the bus company, for £825 million. This was nearly £300 million more than a Charterhouse-

backed management buyout paid for Porterbrook at the end of last year.

Stuart Simpson, a director of Charterhouse Development Capital, said that the scale of returns made on Porterbrook "only come round once in a lifetime". However, he added that Charterhouse had a great deal of confidence in Mr Nelson and hoped to do well once again.

Charterhouse, which has worked closely with Bankers Trust, will provide £90 million of equity, while another £50 million will come from a special form of preference shares.

Bankers Trust is arranging a £120 million issue of high-yielding bonds in America and will also underwrite £140 million of senior debt.

Mr Nelson's small head office team will shortly move to new offices in Savile Row. The company will change its name in a few months' time.

The sale was delayed by the company's complexity. It consists of 140 separate subsidiaries operating in more than 80 countries. The business employs 7,000 people. Its laboratories also test commodities, minerals and environmental standards.

Inchcape will make an exceptional profit of £180 million on the sale. It expects to receive its money early next month. The price paid by Charterhouse includes repayment of inter-company debts.

Mr Cushing said that the size of Testing Services in a specialist field meant there were very few possible trade buyers. He added that the price achieved was substantially above estimates made when the business was first put up for sale in March.

Inchcape, which was advised by Credit Suisse First Boston, is still working on the likely demerger of Bain Hogg, its insurance broking arm.



Smart work: Chris Thompson, left, Austin Reed managing director, and Colin Evans, chairman, have lifted the dividend

Austin Reed sews up 65% profit rise

THE RETURN of consumer confidence and a renewed commitment to classic women's tailoring have put Austin Reed, the clothing retailer, back on track. The company reported pre-tax profits up 65 per cent to £23 million for the six months to August 10 (Sarah Cunningham writes).

A misjudged foray into more casual women's wear last year led to a sharp drop in 1995 profits to £3.4 million from £5.8 million a year earlier.

The company said like-for-like sales were now ahead 8 per cent. Earnings rose 63 per cent to 4.9p a share and the dividend has been increased from 2p to 2.25p.

Tempus, page 28

Lloyds Chemists counts the cost of long bid battle

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LLOYDS CHEMISTS yesterday blamed the uncertainty and costs associated with the long-running struggle for control of the group for a drop in full-year profits. It reported a pre-tax profit of £47 million for the 12 months to June 30, down from £55.6 million a year ago (See Pennington this page).

The company has been at the centre of a bid battle for nearly nine months, and yesterday's drop in profits led to speculation that it has now lost some value to its predators. Analysts said bidders were unlikely to offer a premium to the current share price. At 497p it is just 3p below the original offer from Gehe, the German company,

but they still expect both Gehe and UniChem to come back with fresh bids.

A cash-and-share bid by UniChem and an all-cash bid by Gehe made early this year were referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. In July the Department of Trade and Industry said that for both companies to rebid they had to find buyers willing to make offers in principle for most of the Lloyds wholesaling business.

Lloyds yesterday said that UniChem and Gehe are in talks with the Office of Fair Trading about "numerous offers from prospective purchasers". Lloyds expects "the terms

of the necessary undertakings by UniChem and Gehe to be finalised by October 18", the DTI's deadline. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, will then decide whether the companies may rebid.

Michael Ward, managing director of Lloyds, said the pharmaceutical wholesaling division has been worst hit. "Some customers have asked for different terms, or have gone. And for staff... if they've been able to find alternative employment, they have left," he said.

Lloyds has maintained its final dividend at 7.3p, payable on December 4. The full-year dividend rises to 10.4p (10.2p).

BT suffers setback to Telekom ambitions

By ERIC REGULY

BRITISH Telecom's plans to become Deutsche Telekom's main rival in Germany suffered a blow yesterday when one of its potential partners defected to the rival Cable and Wireless camp.

RWE, a large German utility, said that it ended negotiations to become the third partner in Viag Interkom, the alliance formed by BT and Viag, the German industrial group, because of disagreements over the best way to attack the market when it is deregulated in 1998.

RWE has now agreed in principle to join forces with Vebacom, the telecoms alliance formed by C&W and Veba, Germany's fourth-largest company. Stephen Pettit, executive director of C&W's European business, said that the recruitment of RWE gives C&W a clear advantage in Germany. Europe's richest telecoms market. "BT has lost a major partner, which had telecoms assets and cash," he said.

RWE has 4,300 km of fibre-optic cable that could form the backbone of an alternative telecoms. It has also agreed to contribute DM2.5 billion to a restructured German telecoms group in which C&W will have a 22.5 per cent effective ownership. C&W will receive DM450 million back from the group because its ownership has been diluted somewhat by the arrival of RWE.

BT will look for another German partner and said that it and Viag still intend to bid for Germany's fourth mobile-phone licence this month.

BT shares lost 7½p to 348½p. C&W closed at 430p, down 4p.

Tempus, page 28

"For centuries, man has pondered the nature of space..."

E. CANTONA



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MICHAEL CLARK



October 9, 1996 Tot: 50391 Call: 19634
Put: 30757 FTSE Call: 3608 Put: 7212
Underlying security price.

**FROST GROUP:
ALL HANDS TO THE PUMPS**

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

Share price

Source: Datastream

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep

80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260 280 300

P

business and the market. The S&P 500 was described as brisk with a total of 117,000 contracts completed as the December series of the long gilt finished £1³² higher at £11³².

In longs benchmark Treasury 8 per cent 2015 put on £1¹⁶ at £102²⁷³², while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 rose £1¹⁶ to £104²⁷³².

□ **NEW YORK:** On Wall Street shares fell as concern over Russian President Boris Yeltsin's health led to a sell-off in bonds. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 21.99 points lower at 5,944.78.

FALLS:	
Dunkin' Donuts	627¢ (+35¢)
Card Gro	642¢ (+25¢)
REXAM	373¢ (-12¢)
Glass Wellcome	990¢ (+31¢)
Chiroscience	381¢ (+11¢)
Matthew Clark	330¢ (+9¢)*
WH Smith	455¢ (+8¢)*
SmithKline	800¢ (-15¢)*
British Airways	618¢ (-11¢)
BP	588¢ (+11¢)
Stagecoach	598¢ (+8¢)
Laporte	714¢ (+8¢)*
Siebe	970¢ (+15¢)

Closing Prices Page 31

Most of the money is coming from the public — some £41 million — bar £3 million from Rory McCarthy, a chum of Branson and a fellow balloonist. But with 10 per cent of Victory, plus 50 per cent of Cosmetics Co and 30 per cent of Jeans Co controlled by Virgin, outside

SUITS WOMEN

Austin Reed share price

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

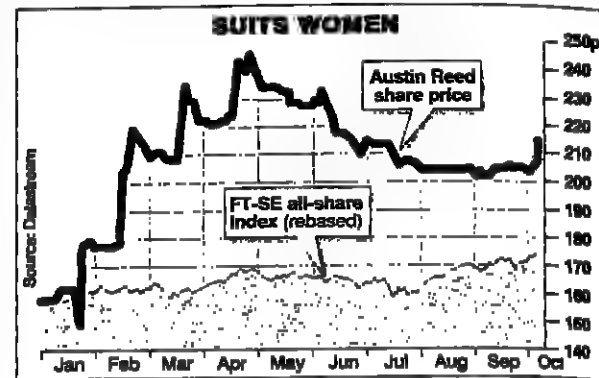
Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

250p
240
230
220
210
200
190
180
170
160
150
140

Stagecoach measure, has done well in satisfaction of the rental stream. The vehicles would be over five-year life span, recouped at a 14 per cent, not a fast-moving, sensitive vehicle coach.

Term funding about pro-

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED



**FROST GROUP:
ALL HANDS TO THE PUMPS**

The graph displays two data series over a period from October to September. The Y-axis represents price, ranging from 80 to 300. The X-axis represents months. The 'FT-SE all-share index (rebased)' is shown as a solid line, and the 'Share price' is shown as a dashed line. The share price starts at approximately 280 in October, drops sharply to around 100 in January, and then recovers to about 180 by February. The FT-SE index starts at approximately 280 in October and remains relatively stable, ending at approximately 280 in September.

Month	FT-SE all-share index (rebased)	Share price
Oct	280	280
Nov	280	280
Dec	280	280
Jan	280	100
Feb	280	180
Mar	280	180
Apr	280	180
May	280	180
Jun	280	180
Jul	280	180
Aug	280	180
Sep	280	180

Source: Datastream

Tokyo	174,003-114,63
Vlenna	16,803-1b,857
Zurich	1 9585-1,9672

14,311-14,333	1 st pr	2 nd 2 nd pr
14,334-14,350	1 st pr	1 st pr
14,351-14,370	1 st pr	2 nd 2 nd pr

Premium - pr. Discount - ds.

ASMO	1,700	Whitman	782
Ladbroke	3,200	Wilms Mid	529
Land Secs	750	Wolsey	340
Legal & Gn	2,200	Wrenna	1,300

Ditcast	37%	30%	Nahin State P
Duke Power	47%	48	Norman Corp
Dun & Bradstreet	61%	62	Nynex Corp
Du Pont	99%	91%	Occidental Pe
Eastman Chem	54%	54	Ohio Edison

40%	41%	Winn-Dixie	34%	34%
40%	40%	Winn-Dixie	34%	34%
42%	42%	Woolworth	21%	21%
44%	44%	Wright (Wm. Jr.)	39%	39%
24%	24%	Xerox	56%	56%
20%	20%	Yellow Corp.	12%	12%

THE TIMES

CITY DIARY

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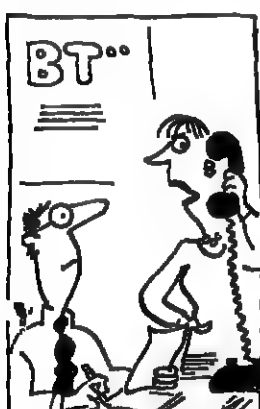
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Davies finds out his limit

CRUEL news for Howard Davies, former Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry and deputy Governor of the Bank of England, who was told recently that he could have a credit card with only a £500 limit. Talking at the British Computer Society Unisys lecture, Davies said he had been drawn in by the idea of collecting Air Miles, everytime he made a purchase on his credit card; he knows how much his two boys like to travel. Why so low a limit? "Well sir," said the clerk at his bank. "You have moved jobs rather a lot in the last two years."

Speedy return

STRANGE goings-on at Legal & General, where the firm's publicity manager waved goodbye and was welcomed back within a week. Peter Timberlake, 36, who joined the insurer 16 years ago, left L&G to join EMR, a small financial services PR agency. But before you can say "about turn," he was back at his desk in Surrey, where he was reinstated in the same job — this time working for Kate Avery, who had been brought in from Barclays to replace Paul Hopper as L&G's marketing director. It was during his week at EMR, says Timberlake, that it dawned on him the "opportunities" he was missing with his old firm. Timberlake's colleagues at L&G have been kind enough not to make him return his leaving present, a rather fancy golf club.



"I'm calling our German office, but keep getting Cable and Wireless"

Phone tips

CITY salesmen have been under attack from Emma Forbes, the TV presenter. After running away from an Interpretational Skills Award at the 1996 European Multimedia Awards for her appearance on *Phone Fundamentals*, an educational interactive CD-ROM on phone behaviour, she delivered an aside on modern manners. Turning to City salesmen, Forbes said: "They need coaching more than anyone... I met a dealer once who thought correct behaviour was to pick up the phone the quickest and shout the loudest."

VICTOR BLANK, chairman and chief executive of Charterhouse Bank, has been sent a pulse-racing invitation for his 54th birthday on November 9. He is one of 80 invited by Winged Fellowship, the charity that takes disabled people on holiday, to take part in a 300-foot bungee jump in Battersea — black tie required.

Missing out

CEDRIC, the pig of British Gas fame, was refused permission to join her GMB chums on a day-trip to Bournemouth yesterday, where they were protesting against "17 years of Tory greed and sleaze". She had to remain in her pen in Tower Hamlets because the union didn't apply in time for a licence to take her out. Instead, pigs from Dorset posed outside the conference centre. A photo-call for John Gummer, Environment Secretary, was relocated because of the blue rosette-wearing swine.

MORAG PRESTON

Fifteen years ago, blinded by tolerance, I still thought the threat of the "loony left" was a scare, got up by the politically neurotic. Until, that is, I read *Manifesto: A Radical Strategy for Britain's Future*. This sometimes trenchant analysis was the work of six highly respectable Labour intellectuals, though each denied personal responsibility for the product of "a truly collective process".

No wonder. Socialist ideology led them logically but ludicrously to a programme that required vast extra public spending, wage controls, import controls, mass nationalisation, state direction of investment and, later on, conversion of some smaller businesses to co-operatives. Some proposals seemed to have no point beyond the logical pursuit of dogma, led to silly contradictions and were bound to lose votes. Home ownership divided rich and poor but was bad for the working classes because it pre-empted democratic allocation. Collective bargaining was to extend to management, town hall and state industrial policy. Consumers needed more power but firms' output should no longer be determined by "essentially trivial dictates of artificially contrived consumerism".

This seemed daft in 1981. In much-diluted form, it ensured that Labour was crushed at the polls in 1983. Now it sounds quaint, serving only to explain why Tony Blair avoids theories or controversial detail.

Sadly, the blinkered ideological urge has not disappeared. It has turned from red to blue. Tories repairing to Bournemouth this

week were treated by the Centre for Policy Studies to a *Conservative Agenda: proposals for a fifth term*, by Tessa Kewick and Edward Heathcoat Amory. Old Lefties who converted to Thatcherism would find the style familiar, down to the inevitable demand for ministers to have much bigger cadres of political advisers at taxpayers' expense. Chairman Mao would approve.

Among much good sense, they put up a series of sure vote losers. These include VAT on food and water, replacing too-successful Peps and Tassas with "more targeted schemes", privatising the Crown Estate and the Forestry Commission as well as the Royal Mail, abolishing student grants and means-testing child benefit.

VAT on water would alone virtually guarantee that Tory MPs were wiped out in the South West. VAT on food and fares would automatically raise pensions and all other benefits linked to the retail price index *pro rata*. Steeper increases in the social security budget would be demanded because these zero-rated items make up a larger proportion of the budgets of those relying on means-tested benefits. Even worse, more people on low incomes would



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

need a benefit top-up. VAT on domestic fuel, a disproportionately large item in pensioners' spending, required £1 of extra public spending for every £3 raised. What leads sane political activists to propose policies that are guaranteed to alienate the very "Middle England" voters they seek to woo? The simple answer is ideology. If you accept the logic of incentives, it must make sense to tax spending more in order to cut income and inheritance tax, regardless of the impact on public spending. If privatisation trans-

formed British Airways, it must be good for anything that is still left, such as the nation's forests, even if good forestry is uneconomic at current interest rates.

After all, doubling VAT in 1979 was unpopular to start with. So was privatisation of BT in 1984, but no one would now want telephones back in the dead hand of the State. Such revolutionary logic has already turned a privatised gas industry that any Conservative could be proud of five years ago into a music-hall joke that is at risk of collapse.

The underlying problem is that Conservatives believe they need new policies to show they have not run out of steam after four terms, just as Labour, to avoid distrust, needs to have as few controversial plans as possible. Privatising the Post Office is not a new policy. It is an old policy that has been shelved. Post Office managers and the Department of Trade and Industry both know privatisation is essential for the Royal Mail to develop its business potential in fast-changing, competitive, cross-border markets. Unfortunately, they cannot agree a way to do it that the public would accept. Mainstream privatisation has nearly run

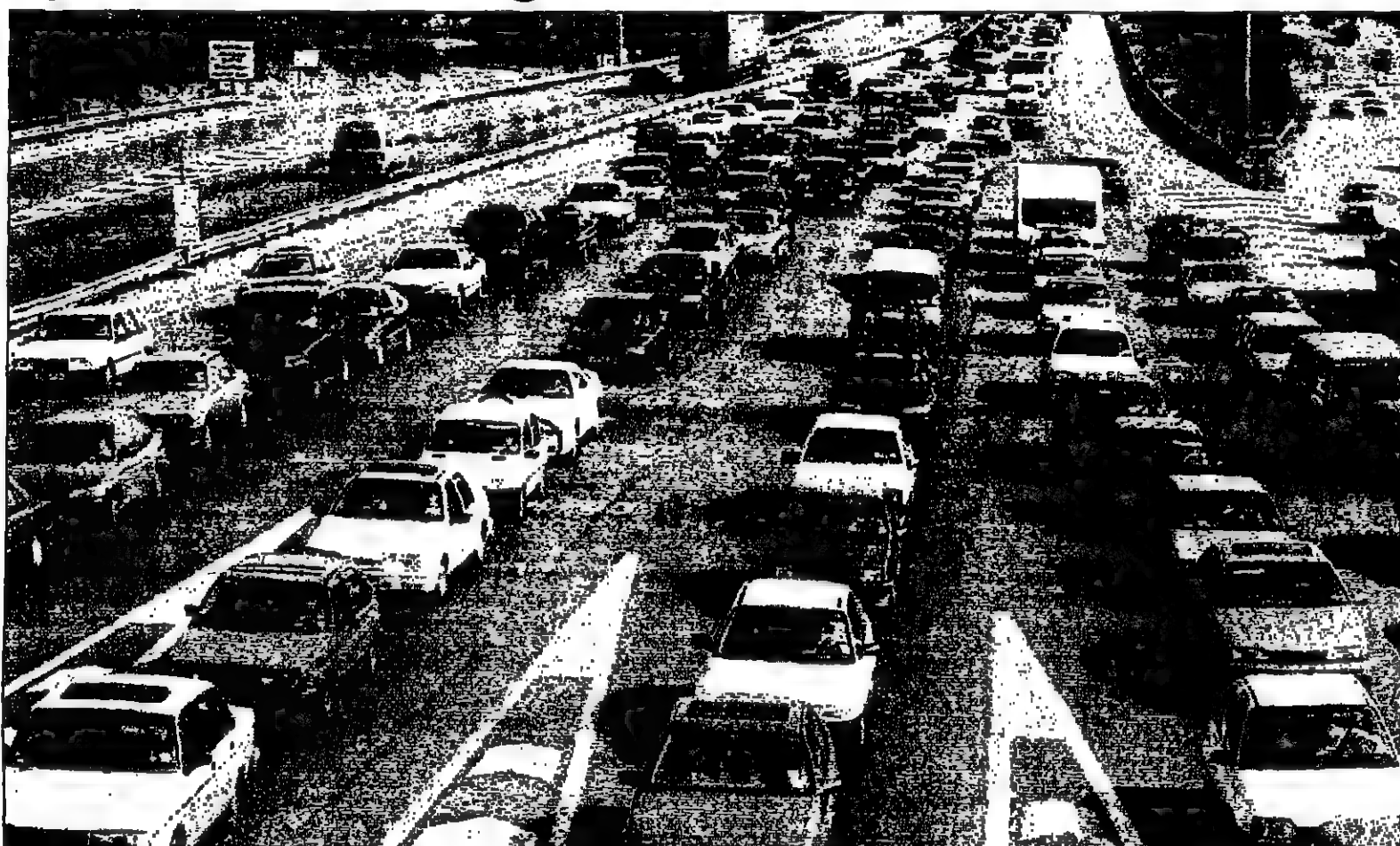
its course. Only hard cases are left. More generally, we have already reaped most of the rewards of the Thatcher market revolution. After 17 years of effort, public spending still takes more than 40 per cent of national income. Yesterday's analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies suggests that no more than 1½ points is yet to be cut by the cyclical upturn to higher output and lower unemployment. That is no more than the increase already brought by switching from direct to indirect taxes.

New policies should tackle concerns that loom as large today as abuse of union power did in 1979. The huge rise in means-tested welfare spending is keeping the tax burden up. It is the worst side-effect of the 1980s medicine caused by growth in relative poverty as state subsidies, regulated private subsidies and uneconomic jobs were swept away. Reducing poverty instead of relieving it is one of the key political issues of the next decade, along with Britain's role in Europe (addressed well by Stephen Dorrell yesterday), marrying economic progress with a cleaner environment and the related problems of drug-related crime and family breakdown.

Labour offers the minimum wage, which sounds good but would probably have only a marginal effect. A five-year Tory agenda might start next month by eliminating income tax on the poorest, which is expensive, and using the tax system to help low-income families with one earner, which is politically incorrect. Unlike the ideologues, it would also win votes.

The success of the rail sell-off masks a policy void on transport, says Jonathan Prynn

Jams today — and jams tomorrow



Insatiable private car use: transport privatisation may be sexy in the City but the changes wrought so far have been cosmetic and costly

After years of sucking in its cheeks over rail privatisation the City has suddenly fallen in love with public transport. Railtrack was one of the most successful privatisations of recent years; shares of Prism Rail, the only quoted pure private rail company, are booming; and Stagecoach is one of the hottest stocks on the market. Financially, at least, transport is sexy.

A year ago it was all so different. One half of the City did not even understand privatisation. The other half believed that it was doomed to failure or that the political risk from Labour was far too great. There would be little interest in passenger franchises and the job would only be part done by the election. So ran the conventional wisdom.

A substantial part of the credit for this turnaround is owed to the City advisers on the sale, notably SBC Warburg and the marketing consultants Dewe Rogerson.

An outrageous bribe with public money it may have been but the £70 million dividend sweeteners offered to investors in Railtrack was a stroke of genius. It meant that greed outweighed fear in investors' attitudes to the sale and ensured a healthy over-subscription and first-day premium. Without that, rail privatisation could still have ended in chaos.

Since the flotation City confidence in privatisation has soared and the pace of the sell-off has accelerated to breakneck speed. More than 80 per cent of the former British Rail businesses have now been sold and 51 per cent of the passenger network will be in private hands by Monday.

Even the West Coast Main Line modernisation, complete with the promise of tilting trains, will be under way before the general election.

At times the speed of the breakup has given an impression of unseemly haste, a feeding frenzy of sales driven by a "scorched earth" political objective of completing the sale before Labour can take the reins.

Nevertheless, the achieve-

ments gave Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, a platform to deliver an unusually upbeat message to the Conservative Party faithful in Bournemouth yesterday.

When Sir George was given the job last July he was told by John Major to turn transport, traditionally an electoral liability for the Conservatives, into a political asset before the next election. With rail privatisation effectively delivered he believes that he is now half way there.

For all the setbacks, political embarrassments, and — to be honest — cock-ups en route, Sir George is adamant that it never crossed his mind that the sale would not go ahead. "It was always going to work. What was in doubt was the pace at which we were going to do it."

"As the City gets more confident in the process we can make swifter progress with franchising than we could a year ago," Sir George said.

He went on: "The judicial challenges were never going to stop it, only hold things up. The only thing that could have stopped it was a defeat in the House of Commons. And on all the votes we won comfortably. We took the view that we could deliver the policy. A year later we have done better than we thought in terms of progress and price, and in terms of perception in the City."

But if the City has been won round there is still a huge selling job to be done on the public. The changes brought about by privatisation so far have been largely cosmetic and incremental, and achieved at great cost.

The public subsidy to the railways doubled, to almost £2 billion, during privatisation and for several years more will not fall to the level of support that was being given to the railways. In the longer term, however, the efficiency of the national railways will be vastly improved. By 2003, when the first group of franchises reach the end of their lives, the subsidy is forecast to fall to £500 million.

Meanwhile, the solution to the transport problems that

are still facing the country — essentially one of how to meet, and ultimately reverse, the apparently insatiable demand for private car use — remain as far away as ever.

Touchingly, Sir George has pinned his hopes on the humble bus. If making trains exciting how much more of a challenge it will be putting the zest into buses.

"I regard the bus as the dark horse of transport, there is so much more that can be done for the bus," insisted Sir George. "You can have more information about when buses are running, newer buses, better bus shelters. In Birmingham, simply by also painting the route of the bus on its side passenger usage

went up by 5 per cent." It is these sorts of low-cost, low-publicity projects that the Department of Transport specialises in these days. Treasury cuts have been so savage — and the department is expecting no favours this year either — that the grand announcements of John MacGregor's day in the early 1990s are looked back on as a half-remembered golden era.

Even the Government's much-vaunted private finance roads initiative could be running into difficulty and may have to be scaled down or halted. The schemes — a form of hire purchase under which private operators pay for roads to be built and are paid back over 30 years by the Government — achieve the short-term objective of relieving the pressure on the PRBR.

Longer term they are a ticking financial time bomb with the combined annual payments on the various private road projects eating up an ever bigger slice of the Government's annual cake.

Ultimately, the only answer may be to take funding of roads out of Treasury control altogether. Plans for a radical full-scale "privatisation" of the motorway and trunk road network have been drawn up at the department but did not find favour with the political high command of the Conservative Party. With the pressure on roads budgets unlikely to go away, the plans could be dusted down again after the election, whoever holds the reins. If you thought that selling Railtrack was a political hot potato, wait till the City gets hold of RoadCorp.

Lang strikes from a different angle

Tory goal of industrial relations reform is finally in sight, says Philip Bassett



Strikes in essential services would be banned under Ian Lang's proposals

Behind the pre-election, union-bashing rhetoric of the Government's announcement yesterday of a new attempt to curb strikes lies a hugely important breakthrough for the Conservatives — a shift in thinking which, if enacted, might finally and cleverly lead them to a long-sought-for goal of, in effect, preventing strikes in Britain's essential services.

On the surface, Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade who has enhanced his reputation both within the Conservative party and Whitehall by his handling of the spate of strikes over the summer, yesterday used his platform at the Conservative Party conference in Bournemouth to rekindle old fears of trade union militancy.

He conjured up not just the strike-bound images of the 1970s which saw off the last Labour government, but attacked them in the language of industrial confrontation: bully and bludgeon, held to ransom, treated with contempt. Good populist stuff with little or no chance of becoming law before a general election, but which makes it look as though the Government is doing something new in the face of strikes in the Post Office, on the railways, on London Underground and elsewhere.

When Parliament returns, Mr Lang will introduce a new Green Paper setting out a package of proposals aimed at further industrial relations reform. The Government's tiny majority means that it will not proceed to a bill unless strike activity became so great it would have little choice but to do so. But after three months of consultation, a

new move on trade union law would form a manifesto commitment.

The Green Paper, which Whitehall officials have been working on for some time, is likely to include a range of options for change, including more cooling-off periods and more balloting. But its central idea was rightly described by Mr Lang yesterday as a "new concept in British industrial relations — that of proportionality".

He went on to say: "If a strike's

effects are disproportionately damaging to the public, then the trade union which organises the strike will risk losing its immunity and being sued for damages." Mr Lang said of unions organising strikes: "If they try to make the public pay, they may well find they will have to pay the public."

If a postal strike is affecting 20 million customers, then its impact might well be seen to be disproportionate. But if a single business goes under

as a result of a much smaller strike, the impact of that strike is 100 per cent proportionate to that firm.

It would not be for the Government, but the courts, to decide the issue. This shift is central. Since 1979, whenever strike activity has risen, the Conservative Government has repeatedly looked at outlawing strikes in essential services, and has repeatedly had to put aside the idea when it has foundered on the rocks of legally defining what constitutes an "essential" service. Clearly, ambulance staff would be. But would transport drivers delivering oxygen to hospitals, particularly if one day they are delivering oxygen, and the next they are delivering sandwiches to high street retailers?

The intellectual leap behind Mr Lang's proposal circumvents this whole quagmire by shifting the onus away from the infinite scrupulousness of Whitehall bill-drafters to the more robust decisions of the courts. This would leave it for individual judges to decide in individual cases brought by individual customers whether or not the strike action is "disproportionate", whether or not in fact it constitutes an essential service.

Some advisers are suggesting that in an age of Conservative-promoted service competition — where, on post or transport, for instance, there are clear alternatives for customers — it might be helpful to draw from current competition law to help to define a "monopoly" service, such as one which has a market share in its area of, say, 25 per cent.

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Mounting concern over new fraud trends

By ROBERT MILLER

A DISTURBING new wave of sophisticated money laundering and fraud techniques is stretching the resources of international agencies, a conference of leading fraudbusters will hear today.

Financial investigators at a two-day conference at Wakefield, Yorkshire, organised by the UK's National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS), will be told of the organisation's mounting concern over "new fraud trends which

reach beyond conventional financial services." These include a new West African fraud and underground or "hawallah" banking.

The warning will be voiced by Detective Inspector Simon Goddard, head of the NCIS Economic Crimes Unit, which acts as an intelligence gathering service and as a clearing house for all suspicious financial transactions.

NCIS, which last year dealt with 13,710 suspicious disclosures, 80 per cent from banks and building societies and 237 from professionals such as accountants and solicitors, then contacts the relevant investigation agency.

In the UK this could be Customs & Excise or a local or regional fraud squad. Given the international and cross-border nature of money laundering and fraud, one of the main roles of NCIS is to maintain close links with agencies such as the FBI and Interpol.

West African fraud, says Mr Goddard, has long been identified as a problem area as it uses "a wide range of scams to part the gullible and the greedy from their cash". The latest such scam involves persuading people to "invest" in a scheme to clean US dollars which have been made unusable on purpose with dye.

"The fraudster claims to have discovered a solvent which will restore the dollars to a useable condition but requires a financial partner to buy stock in the clearing agent. The rewards on offer are usually tens of millions of dollars but the unwary can end up ruined."

Hawallah banking is a money transmission system traditionally associated with members of the Asian and Chinese communities. Although this is not illegal in the UK, because as a non-deposit taking operation it is not regulated by the Bank of England, Mr Goddard says: "It falls outside our established financial reporting systems and could prove ideal for disguising criminal money."

La Salle Partners International, the UK arm of La Salle, which will take over the CIN team, has £500 million under management in the UK. After the acquisition La Salle worldwide will have £9 billion under management.

British Coal disposal

By CARL MORTISHED

BRITISH COAL has sold its property fund management arm to La Salle Partners, the Chicago property asset management group, for an undisclosed price.

CIN Property Management manages £15 billion of real estate for British Coal's pension funds. Its disposal follows the sale of CIN Management, the equity fund managers, to Goldman Sachs last month and the management buyout earlier of British Coal's venture capital business.

The British Coal pension fund property portfolio includes 17 shopping centres in the UK as well as office buildings in London, with a landmark tower near Oxford Circus comprising the BHS flagship store and 200,000 square feet of offices.

La Salle Partners International, the UK arm of La Salle, which will take over the CIN team, has £500 million under management in the UK. After the acquisition La Salle worldwide will have £9 billion under management.



Rise and shine: Bill Simpson, left, and Barry McKenzie, group finance director, reported strong half-year results

Steep drop in Japanese current account surplus

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

JAPAN'S current account surplus fell by nearly 29 per cent in August from a year earlier, with large outflows of yen to overseas capital markets, and import growth swollen by higher oil prices.

The current account surplus shrank by 28.9 per cent to 460.6 billion yen (about £2.7 billion) from August in the

previous year, the finance ministry said yesterday. It expected the current account balance, which has fallen continuously since September 1995, to remain on a downward trend.

A senior ministry official said: "Import growth has been far outpacing increases in exports and the deficit in

services trade has been showing an upward trend."

The surplus in merchandise trade alone fell 27.8 per cent to 566.7 billion yen from August last year. The figures confirm the trend of rising imports, but also reflect a 52 per cent rise in Japan's monthly oil bill. Economists noted the pace of the decline in the surplus was slowing as a weaker yen made Japanese exports more competitive and foreign products more expensive.

Surging outflows of Japanese capital contributed to the decline in August, the official said. With domestic interest rates at record low levels, Japanese investors are focusing on foreign currency deposits and international securities for better returns.

Japan's appetite for foreign travel also helped prune the surplus, due to rising numbers of Japanese travelling abroad in August.

Country Casuals hit

SHARES of Country Casuals shed 12 per cent of their value yesterday, falling 19p to 136½p, after the fashion retail group revealed an interim pre-tax loss of £918,000, a marginal improvement on its £1.04 million loss of a year ago (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The company's biggest problem was at Lerose Manufacturing, where losses increased from £145,000 to

£365,000 in the six months ended July 27, after a major customer reduced demand. The company said that the order book has begun to recover in the past month, but losses would continue into the second half.

Losses were 3.07p a share (3.47p loss) but the company lifted its interim dividend from 1.41p to 1.7p, payable on December 16.

Silentnight beds down for record

By FRASER NELSON

A REVIVAL of the UK's bed market has restored growth at Silentnight Holdings, the bed and cabinet maker, which yesterday said it was on course to return its strongest year-end results since 1994.

Bill Simpson, chief executive, said that the surge in raw material costs which had afflicted the company throughout 1995 had now abated, leaving pre-tax profits of £4.9 million (£3.2 million) in the six months to August 3. He added that demand had also recovered and was gathering strength in the second half.

However, costs at its cabinet division took longer to settle, forcing down the division's operating profits 31 per cent to £977,000. Mr Simpson said the situation had now recovered.

Overall, earnings rose to 6.99p per share (5.22p). The dividend of 3p (2.75p) is due on January 2. Analysts are forecasting record pre-tax full-year profits of £12.5 million.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Halma pays \$9.5m for Volk Optical

HALMA, the UK safety systems and environmental controls company, has acquired Volk Optical Inc. of Cleveland, Ohio, a leading maker of lenses and optical systems used by optometrists and in microsurgery. Halma paid \$9.5 million on completion, with a further \$1.5 million due within 30 days, depending on Volk's level of assets and net cash. Halma is to pay Don and Joan Volk, principal vendors, \$2.5 million in respect of a two-year service agreement and ten-year non-competition agreement. The vendors may also earn a maximum \$2.5 million bonus on Volk sales to October 1998.

In the year to March 31, Volk had sales of \$5.4 million and pre-tax profits of \$1.59 million after deduction of \$328,121 non-recurring salaries. Volk claims 70 per cent of the US market and is a significant supplier in Germany and Japan. Its products are already sold through two Halma subsidiaries, Keeler in Britain and Keeler Instruments in America.

New Holland at \$3.97bn

NEW HOLLAND, the agricultural equipment company owned by Fiat of Italy, will be valued at up to \$3.97 billion when trading in its shares begins on the New York Stock Exchange this month. Fiat's interest could be reduced to 69 per cent after the initial public offering of shares, to be priced at \$20 to \$22, it was announced yesterday. New Holland was formed in 1991 when Fiat acquired Ford New Holland Inc, merging its commercial activities with those of Fiat Geotech.

Jones Group in the red

AN Ir£4 million restructuring charge pushed Jones Group, of the Irish Republic, into the red in the first six months of this year. The shipping, radiator and oil-distribution group reported pre-tax losses of Ir£2.4 million (Ir£1.4 million profit). Denis Magee, chairman, said restructuring of the loss-making radiator division is continuing. Group turnover rose to Ir£49.5 million from (Ir£43 million). Losses were Ir£18.8p a share (Ir£1.1p earnings). There is no interim dividend (Ir£4p).

Delays hurt Riva

LOSSES at Riva, the electronic till company, deepened to £890,000 in the six months to June 30 after delays in launching new products slowed its move away from point-of-sale hardware to till-systems software. The company, which made a loss of £55,000 last time, expects its new product range to help it to much stronger results in the second half. Riva's broker expects it to break even by the year end. Losses were 3p per share (0.2p loss). Again there is no interim dividend.

Europein bounces back

EUROVEIN, the specialist filtration and surface treatment company, returned to profit in the year to July 31, earning £1.36 million before tax. In the previous year the company incurred losses of £1.18 million. Earnings were 9p a share (9.2p loss). The final dividend is reinstated at 2p a share (nil), making a total of 3p (0.51p). Turnover rose to £39.4 million (£32.59 million). Operating profit before reorganisation costs recovered to £184 million (£39,000). The shares rose 12p to 65½p.

Prices fuel Frost hopes

FROST GROUP, the independent petrol retailer, expects to benefit from increases in petrol prices imposed by leading petrol companies. Frost said its Save discount petrol stations had regained competitiveness and made a strong recovery in volumes in August and September. Gross margins have not significantly improved and earnings for the year should be in line with City expectations. Vasant Bhuvra, finance director, is leaving the company "by mutual agreement" on November 1.

Long live the mid-sized firm

Flexibility and a good corporate finance arm help in a changing environment, says John Wosner

Mark Twain's quotation "rumours of my death have been greatly exaggerated" can be equally applied to the medium-sized accountancy firm. For 15 years seasoned observers have been saying that it would disappear in the face of competition from the large accounting firms.

During the 1980s it seemed that this would come true. As well as a consolidation of the biggest firms from eight to six, a number of mid-sized firms were acquired. However, over the past ten years this process has dried up. With two exceptions there have been no notable acquisitions or mergers between mid-tier firms. Why did the experts get it wrong?

The answer lies in the continuing polarisation that has taken place. A recent survey showed that 94 per cent of the top 500 quoted companies are now audited by Big Six firms. Those mid-sized firms that wished to remain in this market accepted the inevitable strategic decision of takeover. Those firms that did not view it as their primary market opted to remain independent so that they could concentrate on their own market, that of small and medium

enterprises. Many of the larger mid-tier firms have, through regional and local coverage, strong positions in the middle market.

What is the middle market? Broadly speaking it includes companies with turnovers of between £5 million and £100 million. Typically they employ between 30 and 1,000 people. The middle market overlaps to some degree with the definitions used for small and medium enterprises. It encompasses about 20,000 businesses in the UK and given its size it is not surprising that mid-tier firms have focused on it as their natural market.

If one bears in mind that about three out of four of these businesses are private companies requiring advice it is not surprising that the role of the professional and his relationship with founding family members and owner-managers is seen as quite distinct.

The typical management team of a public-listed company, on the other hand, must grapple with issues such as corporate governance and duties to public shareholders as paramount rather than ancillary. Nevertheless, one in four companies in the middle market are quoted, which accounts for the fact that several medi-



John Wosner believes mid-tier firms must develop a niche

um-sized firms have maintained and developed their existing skills in Stock Exchange work and come into direct competition with the Big Six.

As a result, those mid-tier firms that have invested in a good quality corporate finance arm have found opportunities to provide corporate advice and finance services to a wide range of institutions not restricted to the servicing of the middle market. Similarly, over the past 20 years Big Six firms have been tempted to extend into the middle market.

What makes the well-focused mid-tier accounting firm

the natural financial adviser? First, it is the importance of long-term relationships. Secondly, the decision-making process in the typical middle-market company is more flexible and responsive than the typical multinational. Thirdly, the middle market company lays greater emphasis on the quality of product or service.

Having said that, there are no grounds for complacency among the mid-tier firms. Private companies are increasingly recognising the need to ensure that their production techniques and information systems are keeping pace with the rapid changes brought

about by new technology. Many middle-market companies are becoming aware of the wide and sophisticated range of short and long-term sources of finance that a few years ago was simply not there for companies outside the multinationals.

Corporate governance is taking a higher priority among many private companies and the use of non-executive directors, the need for adequate internal control procedures and the growth of employee shareholder schemes all point to the need for advice associated with multinationals in the past.

So long as they remain flexible to introduce new financially based consultancy services and advice required by the modern private company, mid-tier firms will be the preferred choice of the middle-market company.

Those able to adapt will at the same time sharpen their ability to develop niches attractive to their clients and clients of Big Six firms.

The days of the mid-size firm are not numbered. But only those that adapt sufficiently to the changing demands will survive and those that do survive will be joined by others, currently too small to be classed as mid-tier, but better able to identify the demands that a fast changing business and technological environment offers.

The author is national managing partner of Pannell Kerr Forster

Training in need of balanced approach

IT IS still a widely held belief that at the current rate of the profession's expansion the entire world population will be accountants by the middle of the next century, if not before. Yet, for the UK at least, the opposite is true. For the main chartered bodies the number of students in training for the profession's exams is in steady long-term decline and has been for some time.

So what has the English ICA, the largest of the accountancy bodies been doing about it? It has been attempting to make the syllabus more relevant and, more important, trying to make the training system more flexible so that firms will feel themselves able to afford to train more young hopefuls.

This effort came to grief earlier in the year when members called a special meeting to throw out the original proposals. The fault was as much poor consultation on the institute's part as its efforts to change the syllabus. But members, particularly those in smaller firms, were outraged at what they saw as an effort to dilute the core content of the exams.

The result has been a huge consultation exercise and a series of tentatively suggestions that may become proposals after yet another consultation exercise. The institute is now terrified of members chucking out the proposals again.

But the problem really is not that smaller firms do not like the idea of change in the examination syllabus and structure. It is that the smaller firms do not like training student accountants at all. In 1985 smaller firms, those of up to ten partners, registered 1,532 new students. By last year the figure was 735.

At the root of the malaise is cash. The big firms, whose students numbers are also in decline, argue that the lack of flexibility in timing of study leave and its length can no longer be justified financially.

And the smaller firms just cannot, they say, afford to train student chartered accountants. It does seem odd that all the exhortations for small firms to become more businesslike has simply resulted in a cull of their own natural successors. The small firms care enough to argue about the syllabus but not enough to recruit a student. The current inexorable 7.5 per cent decline in their student numbers each year will lead, sooner rather than later, to no new chartered accountants coming through in smaller firms.

Theoretically the firms would wither and

die. But, in fact, they would not. What would happen is that there would just be many more certified accountants among their ranks. It is much cheaper and less disruptive to train certified accountants. They cost less and there is less reliance on lengthy periods of inflexible study leave.

Among the current generation of accountants in their prime this must seem a difficult issue. The younger generation is the graduate-only generation. Those in their late forties and early fifties are the last of a generation that tended to start student training straight from school. The three current office-bearers at the Scots ICA, for example, are all accountants who started training straight from school.

The Scots ICA is finding the debate as difficult as the English ICA. There is one council member, for example, who insists on training only certified accountants in his firm. He will tell you, in no uncertain terms, that graduates are useless, that they couldn't find a bus-stop, let alone an error in a trial balance. Yet there is another council member whose firm, of similar size, makes a selling point of training the best and brightest of graduates as Scots CAs.

The problem for the accountancy bodies is finding the right balance between emphasising the high quality and reputation of the qualification and encouraging firms, of all sizes, to take people on as students.

One route, favoured by the English ICA, would be for greater flexibility of exam times. Accountancy firms are at their least busy in August so why not hold the exams then when students are least likely to be needed on audit? And why not cut back on study leave by making the subjects that are based on what used to be known as book-learning into distanced learning technology-packaged programmes. To the older generation this will provoke nightmares of the days when a company called Foulks Lynch dominated the market with mind-numbing correspondence courses at which, theoretically, students laboured through their weekday evenings.

But the answer to the whole problem has to be to make it easier to take on and train students. Keep the exams stiff. But make sure that bright young people, whether straight from school or university, can still train in smaller firms if they wish.



ROBERT BRUCE

Board can't slip its moorings

NEXT week the world should hear what the accountancy profession has decided to do about the Auditing Practices Board. For years it has yearned to be free from the yoke of the accountancy bodies and to move its offices from the stifling precincts of the English ICA's headquarters in Moorgate Place.

Under the proposals for a new review board for the

profession it is expected to be allowed to fly the coop. But it should not expect too much. Rumour has it that it will celebrate its new freedom by moving to Number 3 Moorgate Place, exactly next door to the institute, and into offices that the institute itself has vacated.

Members are going to have to muffle the popping of the champagne corks.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ad hoc campaign

THE unveiling of the latest advertising campaign from the English ICA takes place next week. But people expecting another mildly risqué and baffling poster campaign are going to be disappointed.

This time it will take the form of newspaper advertising and emphasise the benefits of a chartered accountant

as a business adviser. That's the trouble with accountants; they have no sense of adventure.

Charity clarity

AT LEAST someone in the tax business has good timing. TaxAid, the charity that provides tax advice to the needy, has produced *The Tax Debt Handbook*. As the book points

out succinctly: "The doubling of self-employed numbers during the last 15 years, combined with a growth in debt generally, makes it likely that in future every tax adviser will have to assist clients with tax debts more frequently." And self-assessment will simply make the situation worse.

The handbook deserves to be a bestseller, and all the profits go to the charity. It costs £29.50. Details on 0171 624 5216.

ROBERT BRUCE

Equities down across the board


TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
12.40	12.30	Asahi Brew	12.35	-0.8	18.5
12.30	12.20	Asahi Brew	12.25	-0.8	18.5
12.20	12.10	Asahi Brew	12.15	-0.8	18.5
BANKS					
12.10	12.00	Asahi Brew	12.05	-0.8	18.5
12.00	11.90	Asahi Brew	11.95	-0.8	18.5
11.90	11.80	Asahi Brew	11.85	-0.8	18.5
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST					
11.80	11.70	Asahi Brew	11.75	-0.8	18.5
11.70	11.60	Asahi Brew	11.65	-0.8	18.5
11.60	11.50	Asahi Brew	11.55	-0.8	18.5
BUILDING & CONSTRUCT					
11.50	11.40	Asahi Brew	11.45	-0.8	18.5
11.40	11.30	Asahi Brew	11.35	-0.8	18.5
11.30	11.20	Asahi Brew	11.25	-0.8	18.5
BUILDING MATERIALS					
11.20	11.10	Asahi Brew	11.15	-0.8	18.5
11.10	11.00	Asahi Brew	11.05	-0.8	18.5
11.00	10.90	Asahi Brew	10.95	-0.8	18.5
CHEMICALS					
10.90	10.80	Asahi Brew	10.85	-0.8	18.5
10.80	10.70	Asahi Brew	10.75	-0.8	18.5
10.70	10.60	Asahi Brew	10.65	-0.8	18.5
DISTRIBUTORS					
10.60	10.50	Asahi Brew	10.55	-0.8	18.5
10.50	10.40	Asahi Brew	10.45	-0.8	18.5
10.40	10.30	Asahi Brew	10.35	-0.8	18.5

High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	P/E
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
10.30	10.20	Asahi Brew	10.25	-0.8	18.5
10.20	10.10	Asahi Brew	10.15	-0.8	18.5
10.10	10.00	Asahi Brew	10.05	-0.8	18.5
ENGINEERING, VEHICLES					
10.00	9.90	Asahi Brew	9.95	-0.8	18.5
9.90	9.80	Asahi Brew	9.85	-0.8	18.5
9.80	9.70	Asahi Brew	9.75	-0.8	18.5
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
9.70	9.60	Asahi Brew	9.65	-0.8	18.5
9.60	9.50	Asahi Brew	9.55	-0.8	18.5
9.50	9.40	Asahi Brew	9.45	-0.8	18.5
ELECTRICITY					
9.40	9.30	Asahi Brew	9.35	-0.8	18.5
9.30	9.20	Asahi Brew	9.25	-0.8	18.5
9.20	9.10	Asahi Brew	9.15	-0.8	18.5
ELECTRONIC & ELECT					
9.10	9.00	Asahi Brew	9.05	-0.8	18.5
9.00	8.90	Asahi Brew	8.95	-0.8	18.5
8.90	8.80	Asahi Brew	8.85	-0.8	18.5
HEALTHCARE					
8.80	8.70	Asahi Brew	8.75	-0.8	18.5
8.70	8.60	Asahi Brew	8.65	-0.8	18.5
8.60	8.50	Asahi Brew	8.55	-0.8	18.5
HOUSEHOLD GOODS					
8.50	8.40	Asahi Brew	8.45	-0.8	18.5
8.40	8.30	Asahi Brew	8.35	-0.8	18.5
8.30	8.20	Asahi Brew	8.25	-0.8	18.5
INSURANCE					
8.20	8.10	Asahi Brew	8.15	-0.8	18.5
8.10	8.00	Asahi Brew	8.05	-0.8	18.5
8.00	7.90	Asahi Brew	7.95	-0.8	18.5
INVESTMENT TRUSTS					
7.90	7.80	Asahi Brew	7.85	-0.8	18.5
7.80	7.70	Asahi Brew	7.75	-0.8	18.5
7.70	7.60	Asahi Brew	7.65	-0.8	18.5

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10.30	10.20	Asahi Brew	10.25	-0.8	18.5
10.20	10.10	Asahi Brew	10.15	-0.8	18.5
10.10	10.00	Asahi Brew	10.05	-0.8	18.5
PRINTING & PAPER					
10.00	9.90	Asahi Brew	9.95	-0.8	18.5
9.90	9.80	Asahi Brew	9.85	-0.8	18.5
9.80	9.70	Asahi Brew	9.75	-0.8	18.5
MINING					
9.70	9.60	Asahi Brew	9.65	-0.8	18.5
9.60	9.50	Asahi Brew	9.55	-0.8	18.5
9.50	9.40	Asahi Brew	9.45	-0.8	18.5
LEISURE & HOTELS					
9.40	9.30	Asahi Brew	9.35	-0.8	18.5
9.30	9.20	Asahi Brew	9.25	-0.8	18.5
9.20	9.10	Asahi Brew	9.15	-0.8	18.5
PROPERTY					
9.10	9.00	Asahi Brew	9.05	-0.8	18.5
9.00	8.90	Asahi Brew	8.95	-0.8	18.5
8.90	8.80	Asahi Brew	8.85	-0.8	18.5
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
8.80	8.70	Asahi Brew	8.75	-0.8	18.5
8.70	8.60	Asahi Brew	8.65	-0.8	18.5
8.60	8.50	Asahi Brew	8.55	-0.8	18.5
TEXTILES & APPAREL					
8.50	8.40	Asahi Brew	8.45	-0.8	18.5
8.40	8.30	Asahi Brew	8.35	-0.8	18.5
8.30	8.20	Asahi Brew	8.25	-0.8	18.5
OIL & GAS					
8.20	8.10	Asahi Brew	8.15	-0.8	18.5
8.10	8.00	Asahi Brew	8.05	-0.8	18.5
8.00	7.90	Asahi Brew	7.95	-0.8	18.5
OTHER FINANCIAL					
7.90	7.80	Asahi Brew	7.85	-0.8	18.5
7.80	7.70	Asahi Brew	7.75	-0.8	18.5
7.70	7.60	Asahi Brew	7.65	-0.8	18.5
RETAILERS, FOOD					
7.60	7.50	Asahi Brew	7.55	-0.8	18.5
7.50	7.40	Asahi Brew	7.45	-0.8	18.5
7.40	7.30	Asahi Brew	7.35	-0.8	18.5
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
7.30	7.20	Asahi Brew	7.25	-0.8	18.5
7.20	7.10	Asahi Brew	7.15	-0.8	18.5
7.10	7.00	Asahi Brew	7.05	-0.8	18.5
WATER					
7.00	6.90	Asahi Brew	6.95	-0.8	18.5
6.90	6.80	Asahi Brew	6.85	-0.8	18.5
6.80	6.70	Asahi Brew	6.75	-0.8	18.5
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET					
6.70	6.60	Asahi Brew	6.65	-0.8	18.5
6.60	6.50	Asahi Brew	6.55	-0.8	18.5
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Brothers in Trouble presents Sixties England through the eyes of illegal immigrants



FILM 4

... while a 1936 Polish classic, *Yiddle With His Fiddle*, resurfaces in the Barbican's Yiddish season

Noel's lousy party

Oasis, the 'world's best live act', died the death on MTV last night

Liam ain't gonna be with us tonight 'cause he's got a sore throat. This terse announcement by an apparently unperturbed Noel Gallagher prefaced Oasis's *Unplugged* performance, screened last night on MTV.

As if to rub salt in the wound, the younger Gallagher was on prominent display, sitting in a balcony at the side of the Festival Hall stage, consoling himself with beer and cigarettes.

Oasis may be many things, but if there was one myth that this perfunctory performance surely debunked it is that they are one of the world's great live bands. The truly great live bands wouldn't go near a gig if their drummer was unwell, let alone the singer.

Rarely has a more under-motivated group won access to the world's biggest stages, even with Liam on board. Without him the band's lack of charisma and stagecraft were painfully exposed.

Naturally, Noel knew the words and notes he was aiming for (after all, he wrote them). But his performance as stand-in singer was remarkable for its lack of resonance, betraying little involvement with the songs, and even less with his fellow musicians. His colourless tone was particularly noticeable on *Morning Glory*, and even the spine-tingling melody of *Live Forever* and the soul-searching lyrics of *Talk Tonight* were dispatched with an air of detachment.

The *Unplugged* format has a funny way of revealing what is at the core of a performer's art, and bands mess about with it at their peril. On this occasion it was not the talent of the Gallaghers so much as their overweening hubris that was plain for all to see.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Independent's day

CINEMA: *Lone Star* versus *Jack*; imagination and intelligence versus big budget. Geoff Brown has no doubt about the winner

Few American filmmakers look as keenly as John Sayles does at human life, at his country's history, and at cinema itself. Take the maverick independent's latest film, *Lone Star*, a richly textured epic exploring the ethnic mix of the Rio Grande. No visual flourishes mask empty content here: the camera keeps close company with characters and settings. In an age of babble, Sayles allows his people to talk and think.

In *Lone Star* their minds are occupied by burdens from the past. Fittingly, we begin with the past being dug up. In the scrub of a deserted Army shooting range, two sergeants discover a skull, a mason's ring, and a sheriff's star. They belong, we discover, to a corrupt sheriff called Wade, who was run out of town by his successor, Buddy Deeds. Deeds's son Sam (played by Chris Cooper) is the current sheriff of Rio County, a man longing to escape his father's shadow. But wait. Sayles has other pasts to explore. There is Deeds's teenage sweetheart Pilar (Elizabeth Peña), a Mexican-American teacher, all too aware of ethnic tensions. At the Army post we find Colonel Delmore Payne, a fierce disciplinarian whose estranged father, Chris, runs the black community's bar.

This is epic stuff, similar in style to Sayles's multilayered portrait of urban conflicts, *City of Hope*. The camera swings between storylines, slipping between past and present without the benefit of a cut or a dissolve.

Not every plot thread convinces. Scenes devoted to the Paynes suffer from awkward dialogue (unusual with Sayles) and too much didactic intent. But the best stretches crackle with humour, and Sayles shows compassion on all comers, from an old Texas scallywag like Kris Kristofferson's Wade to the battle-scarred Mexican of Miriam Colon, almost on fire with bitterness.

But the biggest impact is made by Cooper, taciturn but tenacious as Sam Deeds, the sheriff sifting through the rubble of his family history. As he sifts, the film's message emerges, about building bridges and not letting the past dictate the present. Messages, Samuel Goldwyn thought, were best left to

Western Union; but a performance like Cooper's — quiet, thoughtful, shaded with ambiguity — might have made Goldwyn change his mind.

Born seven months premature, young Jack Powell suffers from an ageing disorder. His cells develop at four times the normal rate. At the age of ten, he looks about 40, and is fit to be played by Robin Williams, dressed in assorted plaid shirts, jeans and trainers. But to most viewers of *Jack*, the lead character's medical condition will cause less concern than the health of the film's director.

His name is Francis Ford Coppola. He once made good, sometimes great, films, and even his failures were interesting. Until *Jack*, that is: a film so limp and mawkish that you don't know where to put yourself, except under the cinema seat or through the door marked EXIT.

Not that Coppola's technique is failing. *Jack* is a glossy package, impeccably professional in all departments. But no craftsmanship can hide the film's vacuous attempts to extract laughter and tears from Jack's plight as he gets stuck in a school desk, shows off his farts to a tree-house fraternity, and generally faces up to a telescoped life.

The film's failure is made the more embarrassing by the obvious presence of personal feelings. Coppola provides an on-screen dedication: "For Gia: 'When you see a shooting star...'". He is thinking of his son Gian Carlo, killed in 1986 in a boating accident at the age of 23. Making public entertainment from private grief is a hard and delicate art; and the story of *Jack* proves far too bland and shallow to allow genuine emotions to flourish.

At best the film offers comedy with a tender edge, as when sad Jack gets into a cardboard box and bounces down the stairs. Williams himself is equally boxed in by James DeMonaco and Gary Nadeau's script. Bereft of chances for verbal fireworks, he can only give us the fixed grin and twinkle of the little boy lost in a grown-up world. Like Sayles, Coppola has a message, which he trumpets from beginning to end: our existence is fleeting and we must savour every moment.

Lone Star
Curzon West End
15, 135 mins
John Sayles explores the Rio Grande
Jack
Odeon Leicester Square
PG, 113 mins
Coppola reaches his second childhood
Brothers in Trouble
Metro, 15, 102 mins
Resonant drama about illegal Pakistani immigrants
Yiddle with His Fiddle
Barbican Cinema
92 mins
Famous Yiddish musical revived

True enough: but making, or watching, a soporific pain-killer like *Jack* is not the best way to celebrate life.

Desperate to attract finance for *Brothers in Trouble*, the director Udayan Fraser once considered shifting the story from northern England to sunny California. Illegal Mexican immigrants would replace the illegal, hard-working Pakistanis packed into a house in the 1960s; and an American actress would strut her stuff as Mary, a prostitute who serves the house, gets pregnant, and gives birth to turmoil.

Some of the themes in Robert Buckler's script may well have survived a transatlantic transplant. But we would have lost a rare chance to explore a hidden corner of British history. We would also have lost a visually compelling film about 17 lives spent huddled in stairwells or hidden in attics, the cramped spaces lit by candles for fear of attracting outside attention.

SNAP VERDICT

'Must be seen'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

LONE STAR
Richard Wright, 20: It took me a while to get into this as I found it fairly confusing, but the atmosphere alone kept me hooked. Excellent.
Holly Peters, 20: I didn't think that this would be my type of film at all, but it was. The acting was great and the plot, despite being complicated, was gripping.
Ben Peters, 22: One of the best films of the year. Great plot, seedy characters, excellently photographed and with a fantastically eerie feel. Must be seen.
Lucy Knight, 22: I would recommend this to anybody — you'll walk out of the cinema feeling immensely satisfied that you've seen a really good film at last.

JACK
Richard: Reasonably funny, although Robin Williams was not up to his usual form.
Holly: I enjoyed this a lot, in the same way as I loved Tom Hanks in *Big*.
Ben: This was directed by someone called Francis Ford Coppola, which is strange, as someone with exactly the same name makes films that are good. This wasn't.
Lucy: Not too bad, but cheesy rather than tear-jerking.

BROTHERS IN TROUBLE
Richard: I looked at my watch a few times through this, but I didn't find it too boring.
Holly: Moving, and the cast was very strong. However, it dragged a bit, and I would only recommend it to those in a serious mood.
Ben: It's nice to see a British film which isn't about white people laffing around in pretty dresses at the turn of the century.
Lucy: The acting, setting and plot were all strong, but somehow I wasn't convinced.



Sam Deeds (Chris Cooper) knew him. Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest — or, at any rate, the catalyst for John Sayles's fine study of small-town people and their secrets, *Lone Star*

"TERRIFIC...ACTION PACKED, THOUGHT PROVOKING, MOVING AND FILLED WITH EXCELLENT SOLID PERFORMANCES..."

Jonathan Ross, NEWS OF THE WORLD

"...STUNNING...THE MOVIE DRAMA OF THE YEAR"

Steve Wright, THE SUN

"ABSORBING, HONEST AND GUT-WRENCHINGLY EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT"

Kieran Kruennich, COSMOPOLITAN

"ABSOLUTELY COMPELLING"

Bar Pamphrey, DAILY MAIL

Movie advertisement for *Courage Under Fire* featuring Denzel Washington and Meg Ryan. The ad includes critical acclaim quotes and a list of Odeon cinema locations where the film is showing.

Movie advertisement for *Jude* featuring Kristin Scott Thomas and Ian McKellen. The ad includes critical acclaim quotes and a list of Odeon cinema locations where the film is showing.

CHOICE 1

Curtain up on Sam Shepard's passionate drama, Fool for Love

VENUE: Opens tonight, Donmar Warehouse

CHOICE 2

... while Opera North revives Deborah Warner's staging of Wozzeck

VENUE: Opens tonight, Grand Theatre, Leeds

THE TIMES ARTS

NEW VIDEOS

The archives are raided for the revealing, ten-hour documentary, *The Beatles Anthology*

NEW CDS

... and on disc the extraordinary music of Percy Grainger is the subject of a new collected edition

LONDON

FOOL FOR LOVE: Ian Brown directs Sam Shepard's fierce drama of love on the edge of the Mojave desert. With Gavin Granger and Martin Marquez. Donmar Warehouse, 111 Tottenham Court Rd, W1P 0LP. Opens tonight, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat, Thurs & Sat, 4pm. Until November 30.

GREAT ORCHESTRAS OF THE WORLD: One of the world's greatest musical institutions, the Royal Philharmonic, makes its symphonic debut in London. The orchestra's principal conductor, Valery Gergiev, conducts a programme featuring works by Prokofiev and Tchaikovsky. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2A 3PU. 0171-733 8891. 7.30pm.

JERUSALEM CONCERTS: The Israel Philharmonic returns to London for four performances of its new show *Jerusalem*. Conductor, Eyal Sivan. The subject of a BBC 2 documentary, *Jerusalem*, is a city of contrasts, a place of peace and conflict, a place of love and hate. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2A 3PU. 0171-733 8891. 7.30pm.

ALBERT HALL: *Concerto*, Op. 54, by Frédéric Chopin. Conducted by Claudio Abbado. 7.45pm.

NUMBERS: Edited by Richard Norton-Taylor. Directed by Nicolas Kent. A strong and suspenseful account of the case against the Nazi leaders Goebbels, Rosenberg, Keitel and Speer. Performed by the actors who played

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle performs a programme including works by Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms and Bruckner. Birmingham Symphony Hall, Broad Street, B1 2LT. 0121-233 3333. 7.30pm.

DERBY: Aidan Healy draws on his brief but bloody career as a boxer for *Peckinpah*, a new play by the playwright. Directed by Pauline Cullen. Derby Playhouse, 14-16 Market Street, Derby. 01332 363278. Opens today, 3.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat, Sat (Oct 19), 2.45pm. Until October 26.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

Full house, returns only
Seeds at all prices

LAUGHTER ON THE 23RD FLOOR: Neil Simon's very funny comedy about a team of writers for a television show. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045. Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat, Wed & Sat, 3pm.

CASH ON DELIVERY: Comedy starring Michael Caine and directed by his son, Michael. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045. Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat, Wed & Sat, 3pm.

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If you still believe in yesterday

NEW ON VIDEO

THE BEATLES ANTHOLOGY

YOU may well be feeling Beated to death, but the media celebrations continue nonetheless with this ten-hour, eight-pack video edition of the absorbing documentary series directed by Geoff Wornell. The timespan stretches from the Fab Four's births in wartime Liverpool to the follies and ruptures of the late 1960s. Wonderful archive treasures blend with reflective interviews, and the music keeps on coming. Television showed the abbreviated version; this one includes much new material.

A NIGHT IN CASABLANCA

THE last film with all three Marx Brothers at the centre is burdened by dreary direction and one of the world's most inappropriate scores for a comic movie. The script warms up old situations, and the old magic peeps through here and there as Groucho's hotel manager surveys his guests and crosses words with Sig Ruman's Nazi. Groucho Frank Tashlin, trained in cartoons, adds extra sparkle to Harpo's routines.

HAMLET

BMG Video, £5.95. HOW many Theatrobilms in Electronivision have you sent? Exactly. The novelty did not catch on. But at least we are left with this curious record of a live performance of John Gielgud's production at the Lynt Theatre in New York. The Electronivision image tends towards the dark and fuzzy, but there is no hiding Richard Burton as the Prince of Denmark, dressed like the others in 1960s casual and indulging in a little too much Welsh ranting. The cast includes Hume Cronyn as Polonius,

BOX FEATURES



Not about to let it be: fans will want to buy *The Beatles Anthology* on video for the previously unseen footage

and Eileen Herlie as Gertrude; Gielgud himself supplies the Ghost's voice.

THE DRUM

A.E.W. MASON's doughty tale of derring-do on India's northwest frontier in the days of the Raj, convincingly recreated in the hills beyond Harlech and shot in splendid, eye-popping colour. Roger Livesey is in jovial form as Captain Carruthers; Raymond

Massey curdles the blood as the usurper Ghul Khan; and Sabu is simply Sabu as the young prince. Other Alexander Korda productions newly available include *The Thief of Baghdad*, *The Ghost Goes West* and *The Man Who Could Work Miracles*.

SUDDEN DEATH

CIC, £19.95. THE American Vice-President is taken hostage during a Pittsburgh hockey

game. Big deal, you might think. But duty fireman Jean-Claude Van Damme takes it seriously enough to thrust the villains inside meat grinders. Director Peter Hyams pushes things along efficiently enough, though a monotonously sarcastic villain (Powers Boothe) and the sheer density of the action clichés limit the excitement on offer. Available to rent.

GEOFF BROWN

NEW CLASSICAL CDs: Angels and Saxons; Heppner burns in *Fidelio*; a grip on Grainger

VOCAL

Hilary Finch

CHANT IN HONOUR OF ANGLICAN SAINTS

Magnificat/Cave Cantoris Griffin. CDG 4004***. AS THE chanting monks of Europe brace themselves for renewed seasonal promotion, here is a home-grown disc with real character and a strong raison d'être. Magnificat, a five-year-old choir of former Oxford and Cambridge singers directed by Philip Cave, give supple yet sturdy English performances of plainchant celebrating the lives of local saints.

THE ROCK

Ballantine action moves set on Alcatraz, with Nicolas Cage, Sean Connery and Ed Harris. Oceanic Music, £11.99. 0171-484 5045.

STEALING BEAUTY

1995. A woman's portrait with her mother's features. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045.

A TIME TO KILL

1995. A woman's portrait with her mother's features. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045.

LEONORE AND FLORESTAN

On the way comes much marvellous playing from his Munich orchestra, with the finest left for *Leone* No 2 added at the close. At 15 minutes, it is not so much a *bonne bouche* as a full course and it demonstrates the ser's high technical quality.

NOT A FRIVOLOUS MARS

Colin Davis's *Fidelio*. The emotions are elevated and all roads lead to the serenity achieved in the final scene by

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NEW RELEASES

COURAGE UNDER FIRE (15). Denzel Washington searches for truth in the Gulf War. Half-way through, drama, with Meg Ryan. Director, Edward Zwick. Orion, £14.95. 0171-484 5045.

JUDE (15). Vigorously depressing version of Hardy's novel about a man who loses his wife and child. Director, Michael Winterbottom. ABC Television Court Road, 0171-636 5148. 0171-484 5045.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol *) on release across the country

TOUCH OF EVIL

1958. Orson Welles's film noir from 1958 about a man who loses his wife and child. Director, Michael Winterbottom. ABC Television Court Road, 0171-636 5148. 0171-484 5045.

L'AMORE MOLESTO

1995. A woman's portrait with her mother's features. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045.

FALLING ANGELS

1995. A woman's portrait with her mother's features. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045.

THE NUTTY PROFESSOR

1995. A woman's portrait with her mother's features. Directed by Michael Crichton. Lyric Theatre, 200 Strand, WC2R 0EL. 0171-484 5045.

OPERA & BALLET

COLLEGE 0171 632 0000 (24hr) ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA. To 10.30pm. Tickets available on the day. The Royal Opera. Tomorrow 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Mon-Sat) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Sun) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30.

THEATRES

ADRIAN LLOYD WEBBER'S MASTERPIECES "Full of Joy" Journal. To 10.30pm. Tickets available on the day. The Royal Opera. Tomorrow 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Mon-Sat) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Sun) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30.

ENTERTAINMENTS

Tel: 0171 680 6222 or fax: 0171 481 9313

CIRCUSES

BILLY SMART'S Quality Big Top Show. Opens October 12. To 10.30pm. Tickets available on the day. The Royal Opera. Tomorrow 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Mon-Sat) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30. (Sun) 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30.

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THEATRES

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CIRCUSES

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ENTERTAINMENTS

Tel: 0171 680 6222 or fax: 0171 481 9313



MUSIC
Anne Sofie von Otter carries off a major honour at Gramophone's annual awards



THEATRE 1
It's a strange, compelling evening of Greek drama, as the Romanians stage *Les Danaïdes* in Birmingham

THE TIMES ARTS



THEATRE 2
Lack of tension mars the drama of *The Lodger*, a 'Jack the Ripper' potboiler in Stratford East



OPERA
Peter Hall's fine production of *La traviata* opens Glyndebourne Touring Opera's season in style

MUSIC: Today's *Gramophone* awards confound the prophets of doom, says John Allison

Still a few spins left in the classics

When the 1996 *Gramophone* awards are presented at the Savoy today during the classical record industry's biggest annual party, few of the 400 guests will be worrying about the crisis supposedly besetting the business. For a couple of hours they will be able to focus — champagne permitting — on the good news: a clutch of superb recordings covering every corner of the repertoire.

The awards, instituted by *Gramophone* magazine with a low-key event 19 years ago, have grown beyond recognition. Their clout extends well beyond *Gramophone*'s readership — winning recordings are signposted in shops both here and abroad — and in a hyper-competitive market they have come to be trusted. More widely influential than the Grammys, they concentrate almost exclusively on music and performance, without the categories such as Best Sleeve Design that turn up elsewhere. The arbitrary selection of one disc above fine competitors can be unfair, but if there have to be awards, they might as well be these.

Record companies, not all noted for self-effacement, can be justifiably proud of winning — especially this year, since the adjudication process was more democratic than ever. Voting forms have always been circulated to the panel of *Gramophone* critics, but in the early years the companies themselves were invited to nominate recordings; this sometimes resulted in 900 titles being submitted by record executives afraid of leaving out an over-sensitive artist. Nowadays the editorial panel trawls through the year's issues and chooses about 30 discs per category, but all the critics are at liberty to add to the list, and all have a vote once a panel of specialists has reduced each category to a manageable half-dozen.

But until now the Artist, Debut Artist and Record of the Year awards have all been in the gift of the editorial department. This year six of the magazine's leading critics

Small labels now lead many fields

met with the editors to elect these winners — and, in the spirit of *Gramophone*-style glasnost, allowed me in.

What this more open process disclosed was healthy, heated debate and a lack of consensus, but the secret ballot prevented the more powerful personalities from bullying others. There is always a certain inevitability about prolific recording artists winning the big prize, but all these categories require the comparison of unlikes — a flaw in the BBC Young Musician competition, too — and the nominations ranged widely. At least someone was tactful enough to place Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu on separate lists (Artist of the Year and Debut Artist of the Year respectively), though they would doubtless have won something had there been an "Item of the Year" category.

Which brings us back to the record industry's identity crisis, although Alagna and Gheorghiu are not the only artists who this year seem to have performed more in the recording studio than in public. Should records reflect faithfully what is happening in the live musical world, or can they be an "art form" in themselves? Lines get blurred when opera recordings are cast with stars who have never undertaken roles on the stage, or the prospect of a lucrative recording apparently affects casting or programming.

The power of the big record companies is one of the subjects that excite such prophets of doom as Norman Lebrecht, and with some justification. But the major labels have less control of the market than before: EMI, for instance, is making 47 classical records this year, about half the number it released five years ago, while independent labels are proliferating. Some of the small companies may save money by employing obscure radio orchestras and unknown artists, but others — such as Hyperion, Chandos and Collins Classics in this country — use their modest



After heated debate behind not-quite-closed doors, Anne Sofie von Otter is today named *Gramophone* magazine's Artist of the Year

budgets imaginatively to record rare repertoire.

Indeed, the amount of music available on disc must be one sign of health in the industry. When CDs first appeared, nobody thought the new format would match the LP for its range of works, but the recorded repertoire is now wider than ever, not least in contemporary music, where previously a living composer had to be a Very Big Name to get into the catalogue. Too much standard repertoire is still being duplicated, but no longer at the expense of the neglected works that are being recorded, often methodically, for the first time. Historical issues make up another growth area, and companies have been quick to respond to the rich archives from behind the old Iron Curtain.

While outbacks among the big companies do suggest a certain unease in the record industry, it is not the only part of the music scene to be in flux. Old hands in the business say "Crisis? What crisis?" and argue that it has always been unstable. But in a changing market, it is the big companies which are in danger of being left behind, unable to react quickly because they are tied to contracts negotiated

years ago that may also run beyond 2000. It is hard not to detect a sense of panic in the pop-style marketing of chanting monks and wet-T-shirted violinists.

Most of *Gramophone*'s readers occupy the more serious end of the market where sales are slow. Record companies advertise heavily in the magazine, and each depends on the other. But *Gramophone*'s editorial director, Christopher Pollard, defends his position: "A reader expects *Gramophone* to be the best informed medium on the subject. I don't believe that we could publish a magazine like *Gramophone* if we didn't expose ourselves to the industry's hopes and aspirations, its disappointments and frustrations."

By "frustrations" he means the complaints that come when unfavourable reviews are published. "We have very naked discussions, because they sincerely believe that their artists have been misinterpreted. But they trade on the integrity of the magazine every time it says something positive, so they have to accept the negative reviews. I believe there are still people in certain companies who haven't forgiven me for what we said about a record ten years ago."

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Lifetime Achievement: Lord Menuhin
Artist of the Year: Anne Sofie von Otter
Young Artist of the Year: David Pyatt, horn
Engineering: Sibelius Symphony No 5, Lahti SO/Vanika, BIS
Video: Yehudi Menuhin — The Violin of the Century, EMI
Best Selling Record: Lesley Garrett, Soprano in Red, Silva
Classic FM People's choice: Bryn Terfel, The Vagabond, DG
Baroque (non vocal): Christophe Colin, Giovanni Antonini, Vivaldi Concertos, Teldec
Baroque (vocal): Andreas Scholl, Chiara Banchini, Vivaldi Stabat Mater, Harmonia Mundi
Chamber: Mosquitos Quartet, Haydn String Quartets, Aukia Atrée Choral, John Eliot Gardiner, Grainger Songs and Dances, Ballade, Philips
Concerto: Stephen Hough, CBSO/Foster, Piano Concertos, Hyperion
Contemporary: Edgar Howarth, Birtwistle's Gawain, Collins Classics
Early Music: Orlando Consort, Dunstable Sacred Choral Works, Motormo
Early Opera: Nicholas McGegan, Handel's Artacanta, Harmonia Mundi
Historic non vocal: Walter Gieseking, Debussy Complete Piano Works, EMI
Historic Vocal: Lucie Bori, Victor Recordings (1925-37), Romophone
Instrumental: Mikhail Pletnev, Scarlatti Keyboard Sonatas, Virgin Classics
Musical Theatre: Eric Stern, Geraint's Oh Kay!, Nonesuch
Opera: Valery Gergiev, Prokofiev's The Fiery Angel, Philips
Orchestra: Franz Weller-Möet, Schmidt Symphony No 4, EMI
Solo Vocal: Ian Bostridge, Schubert's Die schöne Müllerin, Graham Johnson (Hyperion)

OPERA

La traviata
Glyndebourne

Be gentle, it's her first time

PETER HALL'S production of *La traviata* (1987) was always one of his best, and it is good to see it back to open Glyndebourne Touring Opera's autumn season. Or some of it, at least. John Gunter's sets and costumes still look very handsome, but a touring version has to do without the ballets-roses nymphs entertaining the dirty old men at Flora's party.

Still, there is enough suggestion of sleaze at curtain-rise, with women smoking cigarettes and a punter inspecting the goods on offer before paying for them, for us to know exactly what sort of society we are entering. Otherwise, the producer Aidan Lang follows the outlines of the Hall staging, while rejecting much of its detail.

Judith Howarth was singing her first Violetta. She has so much

going for her — all the notes, the *physique du rôle* — that it is hard to say precisely why the first night fell a little flat. The first act goes well, and will go even better when she sharpens her coloratura to serve the drama; as all too few Violettas can, she manages to suggest how she earns a living, her brittle hardness giving way to hysteria and self-disgust in *Senza più*. The agonies of the death scene are equally vividly presented. But what comes in between is at this stage a fairly blank canvas: She could afford, perhaps, to disobey the director and externalise the emotion, and she could make the words do more of the work.

She was variably partnered: Paul Nilton is alive to every facet of Alfredo's character: he really *thinks* the words and notes, and turns the thoughts into musical phrases that grip the imagination in a truly three-dimensional impersonation. In contrast, Robert Hayward is one of those Germans who seek to sway Violetta with a sheer barrage of sound. The evening gains from having experienced stage animals such as Robert Poulton (Baron), Geoffrey Dolton (Marquis) and Alan Oke (Gaston) in support.

The score (jazzy cut, black mark) is very well conducted by Ivor Bolton. The gambling scene goes especially well and the preludes never drag. Verdi with muscle, which is as it should be.

RODNEY MILNES

THEATRE: Modern conclusion to an Ancient Greek tragedy left in the lap of sadistic gods; Jack the Ripper bores audiences to death in the East End

Send in the bald, naked husbands

AT THE end of this strange, compelling evening the Greek gods — waxen, white-suited figures — warn against the perils of hubris. They appear to be referring to the Danaïdes, a vast phalanx of virgin sisters who have been spectacularly punished for murdering an equally vast phalanx of unwanted husbands. But there was a side of me that wondered if their words weren't also aimed at Silvia Purcarete, the Romanian director giving Aeschylus's *Danaïdes* what has been incautiously described as its world premiere.

Actually, only the first part of the *Danaïdes* trilogy survives. *The Suppliants*, as it's called, is almost never performed, partly because it is so inconclusive. Danaos's 50 daughters, sickened by the

Les Danaïdes
National Indoor Arena, Birmingham

idea of marrying their 50 first cousins, flee from Egypt to sanctuary in Argos. Their would-be spouses then arrive by ship and, after sending a herald to terrorise them, beat a retreat. And that is that.

What happened in the play's two sequels? Nobody really knows; but presumably the Egyptians massacred the Argives, got married and were killed by their wives. Much was doubtless made of Hypermetra, the only Danaïde to spare her husband, and Lynceus, the lucky survivor. What seems certain is that Aeschylus's denou-



Some of the 50 ill-fated would-be husbands in Silvia Purcarete's *Les Danaïdes*

ment was upbeat, reverent, and altogether different to the one imposed on him by Purcarete, who makes little of Hypermetra, less of Lynceus, but a lot of gods who treat the poor Danaïdes with the gleaming sadism of SS troops.

Aeschylus doubtless regarded the Danaïde invasion as a formative moment in what would become Greek civilisation. As his programme-note suggests, Purcarete thinks of it as one of the founding myths of a suffering, divided Europe. That is as may be. What is certain, though, is that he does some magical things with the

French-speaking chorus of 100 he has carted through Europe and is now taking to the Dublin Theatre Festival via Birmingham and Glasgow.

The 50 Danaïdes could look ridiculous in their long blue costumes, especially as they carry what look either like white suitcases or bits of Berlin Wall, depending on whether these are being used as picnic baskets or barricades. Similarly with 50 women who come with orange skirts and bald heads, like Hare Krishna hoodlums. But then the women fluster, scurry, mew like seagulls and fall

like dominoes. Meanwhile, great swaths of men aggressively frolic, caw like rooks and collapse on masse, knives in their foreheads.

Purcarete's gods may come more from Euripides, Beckett and Kafka than Aeschylus. But there is something innately thrilling in the sheer presence of a 100-person chorus. And Purcarete drills it so deftly that you cannot doubt its menace, its vulnerability, or whatever he wants. That is Aeschylean enough for me.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

A non-ripping yarn

The Lodger
Theatre Royal, Stratford East

THIS limping drama purports to probe the emotional recesses of a woman who continues to shelter a sinister man long after she suspects him of being Jack the Ripper. Patrick Prior has drawn the play from the celebrated novel by Mrs Belloc Lowndes, never out of print since she penned her probing in 1913.

There is psychological acuity in her treatment of the heroine, the grimly repressed Mrs Bunting, formerly in service but now running a lodging-house. Ferociously snobbish, she resists the accumulating evidence that convinces even her husband that the police should be told of their lodger's night-time walks, the rubber-soled shoes he tries to throw away after the police discover the murderer's fingerprints (nice period word), and his habit of going down to the cellar to dispose of unspecified matter in the furnace.

Mr Sleuth, as this character is oddly named, though not with any deeper meaning attached, is a gentleman, and a gentleman could not slit a girl from neck to waist and



Landlady Lynn Farleigh and Murray Melvin

spread her insides around the East End. And even if he did, well, he is a gentleman, and ex-servants never lose the erotic thrill that comes of being close to men of a superior class.

This seems to be how Mrs Belloc Lowndes saw the situation, and it is how Lynn Farleigh plays Mrs Bunting, snapping at her husband (Alan Ford) for lacking social

aspirations, pressing the scarf dropped by Mr Sleuth (John Labanowski) to her bosom; now clamouring to tell her story, now pursing her lips in a brief resolve to say no more.

These indecisions on her part are expressed within the framing device, in which she interrupts a show being presented at Madame Tussaud's by Murray Melvin. Draper and prissy, he nudges her recollections, hands her props, and accidentally strides off stage into the scenery and has to reappear and exit again.

The trouble is that, even though Shirley Thompson's violin buzzes away in the orchestra pit to indicate menace, the events intended to embody this are either fragmentary or plonkily specific. Jenny Tiramani's revolving set creates a Victorian interior from no more than a red damask curtain and a pair of chairs; Philip Hedley's direction uses the revolve to increase alarm; but the play is neither tense enough nor dense enough to nourish the imagination.

JEREMY KINGSTON

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Alan Bullock on a re-examination of the German resistance to Hitler, doomed by lack of cohesion and the Führer's power and luck

For the sake of the nation

Between 1938 and 1944 as many as 15 attempts were made to assassinate Hitler. In only two cases, however, was he in danger and the final attempt, on July 20, 1944, not only failed but led to sweeping arrests and the execution of many of those involved.

What difference it would have made if Hitler had been killed is impossible to say. What was certain was that, if the plot failed, those who had attempted to alter the course of history would be condemned by most Germans as traitors and dismissed outside Germany as irrelevant.

Joachim Fest believes that it is too simple and, in a book originally addressed to a German readership and translated here by Bruce Little, re-examines the history of the German Resistance with the object not of adding to what is already known about it, but of looking at it in a different context.

Instead of concentrating his attention on the events of July 20, 1944, Fest shows this to have been a last, despairing attempt in a succession of such plots, beginning with the plan to seize Hitler in September 1938 and so prevent war. This was undercut by Britain and France accepting the partition of Czechoslovakia by the Munich Agreement.

Those who became involved with the Resistance put themselves at risk, day and night, in a society permeated by the Gestapo and its informers. They are drawn by Fest as a loosely connected collection of individuals, with very different

**PLOTTING
HITLER'S DEATH**
The German Resistance to Hitler, 1933-45
By Joachim Fest
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 92774 4

views (for example, on the use of violence), and motivated by a revolt of conscience, a matter of personal character, rather than a unifying ideology. The only thing they shared was their detestation of the evil regime under which they lived and of the man who personified it. Much of the time was spent in debating the principles on which a future Germany would be created after the Nazi regime had been demolished. There was no agreement on going beyond that and either arresting or killing Hitler. Those prepared to consider that ran up against the formidable protection provided by the SS and Hitler's own incredible luck.

Only the Army could carry out a coup d'état, and it was among a group of younger officers, particularly those holding staff and intelligence appointments, that such action was discussed. Their hope both between 1938 and 1939, before



Hitler, with Mussolini, inspects the damage done to his headquarters by the bomb of July 20, 1944

the defeat of France, and between 1942 and 1944, after Stalingrad forced the Germans into retreat, was to persuade one of the generals holding command over troops to act. None would take the risk. Only then, in a gesture close to despair, with Germany facing defeat and the Gestapo closing in on the conspirators, did the 37-year-old officer Count Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg decide to act on his own.

Fest understands the bitterness the conspirators felt at their "betrayal" — as they saw it — by the Western powers, particularly the British, who made no response to their approaches. But he sees that this was an example of their basic mistake, making their actions dependent on events they could neither foresee nor control. "In the fall of 1938, they made their coup contingent on Hitler's going to war, and on a firm response from

Britain and France. Later they made their activities dependent on Hitler's victories and defeats: victories, they felt, made him popular and therefore unassailable, while defeats laid them, his internal enemies, open to accusations of abetting the downfall of their own country. The conspirators did not overcome this basic flaw until shortly before July 20, 1944."

In the end, the whole story of the German Resistance is one of fail-

ure. But suppose one accepts, as Fest does, that it is virtually impossible to overthrow a totalitarian regime from the inside, especially one as powerful as Nazi Germany, then a different picture emerges. It is no longer the record of failure that matters. "The particular heroism of the German Resistance resides precisely in the hopelessness of the conspirators' position. It was no longer success or failure that was decisive. All that remained was to leave a dramatic sign disavowing Hitler and everything his regime stood for, 'courage' — 'whatever the cost'." The purpose of July 20 was the gesture itself: it was its own justification.

This view is supported by the trial. Six hundred were arrested and many of them subjected to brutal tortures. Time and again, however, those wanted by the police gave themselves up, in the belief that the show trial which Hitler planned could be used as a forum for denouncing the Nazis. Defying the bullying of the judge, the odious Freisler, the prisoners in the dock succeeded so well that on August 17 Hitler forbade any further reporting of the trials, or any mention of the executions. It is impossible to say how far

Joachim Fest's revisionist plea will alter general opinion in Germany where it is "virtually lost to history". But for myself I have no doubt that he is right. No one put it better than Henning von Tresckow, one of the officers who never wavered. He took his own life rather than waiting to have all he knew about the Resistance extracted from him by torture and his last words were written down by a fellow conspirator, Fabian von Schlabrendorff: "Now they will all fall upon us and cover us with abuse. But I am convinced, now as much as ever, that we have done the right thing. I believe Hitler to be the arch-enemy, not only of Germany, but of the entire world... Just as God once promised Abraham that He would spare Sodom if only ten just men could be found in the city, I hope that, for our sake, He will not destroy Germany. No one among us can complain about his death, for whoever joined our ranks put on the poisoned shirt of Nessus. A man's moral worth is established only at the point where he is prepared to give his life for his convictions."

These words stand as an epitaph for those who, like Tresckow and Stauffenberg, had the courage, despite their failure, to maintain in the name of Germany their repudiation of Hitler and the Third Reich.

Lord Bullock is founding Master of St Catherine's College, Oxford, and the author of Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives (Fontana).

The toils and troubles of the chattering class

Howard Davies on the caustic return of a novelist who doubts we could construct a just society

After five years' silence Margaret Drabble has returned with a bang. *The Witch of Exmoor* is a novel about social justice. In chapter one — a family reunion — the dramatic personae discuss John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*. They play a dinner party game called "The Veil of Ignorance". In it, you have to work out "the kind of society which you would be willing to accept if you didn't in advance know your own place in it". You have to imagine yourself in "the original position of choice" where you don't know if you will be rich or poor, influential or powerless, talented or underprivileged.

Drabble — whose authorial voice is powerfully present throughout — does not seek to elaborate the rules of her own just society; nor do her characters articulate theirs. That is perhaps fortunate from the standpoint of readability. But the plot offers a kind of running commentary on the extent to which contemporary British society matches up to this testing criterion, or is, instead, constructed only for the benefit of the cosseted middle class.

The witch of the title is Frieda Haxby, an elderly writer self-exiled to a gloomy semi-detached pile on the edge of Exmoor, overlooking the Bristol Channel. Her son and two daughters are all married and successful in London life. Frieda is a writer, engaged on her memoirs. (Perhaps Ms Drabble, who spends time at Porlock Weir these days, has met her type in the fleshpots of Minehead.) Frieda is also, for reasons which are not entirely

**THE WITCH OF
EXMOOR**
By Margaret Drabble
Viking, £16
ISBN 0 670 82265 8



Drabble: lifting the veil

clear, ill-disposed towards most of her offspring and their families.

And so is Ms Drabble. She paints them, first, in two dimensions. They are, it would seem, devoted couples. But all is not as it appears. They are smug, complacent. They are riding for a fall. We should not be too surprised. Their society is not just. We shall see how they suffer.

Why am I writing like this? Because Ms Drabble does. It can be tiresome, as you see. But what is more interesting is the insistent authorial voice takes pleasure in the misfortunes of these not — especially — wicked representatives of the English chattering classes. She visits misfortunes on them — a son's drug addiction, a friend's

messy suicide — with malicious glee. And, with only one exception, they end the novel in a state below their original position. All sins are punished severely. One character comes in for an "unjust", though unasked for, inheritance: he becomes clinically depressed.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Ms Drabble doesn't like us any more. She exhibits an acute case of what Marxists used to call alienation. She thinks we are nothing like as nice as we look. We are trivial; we are hypocrites. We acquiesce in a society which we would not construct if we didn't know what our place in it would be. And we are beyond redemption: "The middle classes of England... would any of them wish for change? Given a choice between anything more serious than decaffeinated coffee or herbal tea, would they dare to choose?"

I believe she overstates the case. We are not as bad as all that — and perhaps less hypocritical than most. Perhaps our society does not come up to John Rawls's testing standard. But it is hard to think of any which do, or did. And one of our strengths is that we harbour, in our midst, caustic chroniclers like Ms Drabble. This is a powerful novel, which handles big themes in a brusque, muscular, chin-leading style. Indeed its prime fault is brevity; sometimes one wishes that she would pause for breath. At the end, I wished it had been twice as long.

Howard Davies is Deputy Governor of the Bank of England.



This decorous 19th-century vision of George III's Coronation in 1761 is not matched by Horace Walpole's acerbic version of the event

The hesitancy of his delivery takes off from the force of his arguments

By current standards this is a short biography, without footnotes or list of sources. Its author is going for a Stracheyite approach but his own intrusiveness is often nervously overwrought, especially in the first half.

In the introduction he explains that although Horace Walpole was a homosexual he, Mowl, is "happily married to a second wife and the experienced father of a school-age son." Any reader must feel that Walpole, son of the Prime Minister, a man of enormous warmth of character (though he could be a bit of a bitch on occasions), populariser of rococo Gothic in architecture and in the novel, one of the heroes of 18th-century English taste, its greatest letter-writer and one of its greatest historians, deserved something cleverer than this as an opening gambit.

Mowl then goes on to insult, among many other things, the whole of English poetry in the 18th century, referring to "the gin-trap of Dryden-Pope diction" (whatever that means). Misplaced assurance at such moments is matched by sudden collapses of focus elsewhere. Of *The Castle of Otranto* he says that "a brief précis is impossible" and then gives precisely that over the next two pages. Of Walpole's drama *The Mystical Woman*, he says in the same sentence that it "is tantalisingly near to being a masterpiece... only performable as a curiosity".

Many passages are murky in this way or are repetitive or simply jar, largely on account of Mowl's excess of self, and I am not sure the dignity of the

Duncan Fallowell

HORACE WALPOLE
The Great Outsider
By Timothy Mowl
John Murray, £19.99
ISBN 0 7195 3618 8

page is served by widespread use of late-20th-century gay parlance such as "size queen" or "outing", especially since there is no actual evidence for Walpole's ever having had sex with anyone at all.

What has been taking place is an attempt by Timothy Mowl to match the sophisticated eccentricity of his subject — he's been reading too many of those wonderfully vivid and opinionated letters. This is a recurring blight on a book which otherwise contains many delicious things.

It is both original and rewarding of Mr Mowl to present Walpole as England's 18th-century Proust. Less analytical than Proust, he is just as effective in conveying the entire doings of a milieu and is far more informative. Such an association also points up the modernness of Walpole's eclectic, often mischievous personality.

The shape of Walpole's life, its social, political and cultural features, come through very clearly. In particular, a lot of effort has gone into the reconstruction of Walpole's emotional infatuation, most of it speculative but most of it plausible. Mowl subtitles him the Great Outsider but, as the author admits, he was the great insider too. Rarely indeed have the two aspects come so opportunely together.

This enabled Walpole to relate, for example, in his description of George III's Coronation at Westminster Abbey, how when the new young Queen Charlotte retired to a special "convenience" set up for her behind the high altar, "what found she but — the Duke of Newcastle perked up in the very act upon the annotated velvet close-stool".

At the end of Walpole's life, he rediscovered Paris because, then as now, it was not against like London: "One is never old here, or never thought so... the first step towards being in fashion is to lose an eye or a tooth..."

He died on March 2, 1797. I have been unable to locate in this text the day, or even the year, of his birth.

SATURDAY

John Naughton on Alec Guinness, Claire Bloom and Joan Collins
Marcel Berlins on Patricia Cornwell
Bevis Hillier looks back on 100 years of Country Life

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Peter Ackroyd joins Harold Bloom in rejecting the bankrupt spirituality of 'New Age' beliefs

Deaf to the blasts of ecstasy

It was Benjamin Disraeli who, on discussing the question of whether man evolved from apes or angels, declared "I am on the side of the angels". He is not alone. One of the most remarkable statements in Harold Bloom's *Omens of Millennium* concerns the level of piety, or credulity, among the American public: 69 per cent of that population believe in angels, and 46 per cent are persuaded that they do indeed "have their own guardian angels".

Professor Bloom suggests that this "angelicism" is the consequence of early 19th-century millenarian yearnings, epitomised by the revelations of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith in 1823, but the early Puritan brethren of New England were also vouchsafed omens and visions. Burning a witch in Salem is only a step away from wearing "cherub pins" in New York. To believe in angels, after all, also implies a belief in demons. This is a country apparently permeated by religious, or at least religious, fantasies.

Professor Bloom in fact cites four such fantasies as indicating what he describes as "American millennial hysteria" — the trust in angels, the belief in prophetic dreams, the fashion for "near-death" experiences, and expectations of the end of the world. It is an impressive list, even by biblical standards, but for Professor Bloom it represents a weakening and vulgarisation of any authentic religious spirit. He describes these phenomena as part of "Aquarian, or made-in-America, gnosticism", and an indication of a spurious hermeticism which has nothing whatever to do with European Christianity. In his previous work, *The Western Canon*, Bloom thoroughly rejected all the fashionable pieties of current literary criticism and espoused the virtues of an authoritative tradition. Here, in *Omens of Millennium*, he similarly rejects the debased "New Age" gabble of America's high priests and even higher priestesses.

He is particularly fierce on the subject of angels. They were once terrifying and formidable creatures. Muhammad fainted at the sight of one; St Paul distrusted them; in the *Book of Enoch* they descend from the skies and ravish young women, begetting a monstrous brood of children. They are not necessarily nice to know, in other words, and hardly a suitable subject for a tie-pin.

That, of course, is Professor Bloom's argument. The contemporary world has lost its dread of angels, and instead has turned them

OMENS OF MILLENNIUM
By Harold Bloom
Fourth Estate, £15.99
ISBN 1 85196 555 5

into the insipid figures of current angelology who stop traffic accidents and help old ladies across the road. Otherwise they are reborn as aliens or "UFOs", lighting up the sky of the mid-West in all the colours of Walt Disney. The authentic terror and mystery of creation are missing in a society which lacks a true spiritual inheritance.

That is why Professor Bloom suggests that the camp followers of the "New Age", and other forms of fake "enlightenment", make some effort to understand the genuine tradition of which they are the ragged and bankrupt heirs. "Belief in angels," he writes, "is belief in false miracles, and is an offence against God". He then proceeds to explore the true gnostic tradition in some detail: he touches upon Zoroaster and Hermes Trismegistus, Blake and Emerson, the kabbalah and the Gospel of Thomas.

One element of that faith maintains that the God of this world, worshipped in synagogues and churches and temples, is a most cruel and deceitful demon: the true God, sometimes known as the "Divine Man" or "Man of Light" has been separated from humankind and continually laments his estrangement from us. Yet he remains an inalienable part of us, according to gnostic theory, just as we are an aspect of him.

This belief is conveyed by the gnostic Valentinus in a fragment that begins "From the beginning you have been immortal, and you are children of eternal life". There is a particle of eternity within us, after all, beyond the accidents of Creation and the fall into time. Bloom himself has a wonderful description of this condition, when he notes that "there is 'something in the self that cannot die, because it was never born'. If he were not a literary scholar, he might have been a prophet."

A careful reading of this book does in fact suggest that there are certain insistent patterns of belief to be found in a variety of apparently disparate faiths, and might therefore confirm the studies of some cultural historians who have outlined a *prisca*



Made-in-America gnosticism: Angel, by Wisconsin sculptor Fred Smith (d.1976), from *Angels in Art* (Abbeyville, £15)

sapientia or ancient wisdom which has entered the consciousness of various races and tribes. Professor Bloom traces the Sufi belief in the four forms of the astral body, for example, which bears a startling resemblance to William Blake's wonderful and apparently self-contained notion of the "Fourfold Vision".

It has nothing to do with those "near-death" experiences and divinatory dreams of which the American public is so fond. These are delusions, fuelled by a tortuous self-regard and vapid benevolence. They are hallucinations which are, in the words of Bloom, "impoverished by our incapacity for spiritual ecstasy". He is in fact very good and sensible on the

nature of dreams. He quotes the Talmudic saying that "All dreams follow the mouth", which can be taken to mean that they can be endlessly and still correctly interpreted.

Dreaming is also a means of gaining access to the apparently limitless number of images, texts and symbols of which the cerebellum is composed — as Bloom suggests, in another memorable phrase, "we die solitary deaths, but dream communal dreams". In that context he attacks Freud for not becoming a prophet, and therefore not fulfilling his inheritance. Freud remains a central figure of the 20th century, but he will no doubt be remembered as a

novelist of emotion rather than a seer: he refused to recognise the prophetic power of dreams, for example, and in that lack of visionary understanding he betrayed himself.

It is an interesting argument — all of Bloom's arguments are interesting, although there are occasions when they are maintained at such a high level of theory that they may confuse the unwary. But this is an engaging and refreshing book. It is also a necessary one, in that it may help to reintroduce the texture of the spiritual world within the increasingly tattered fabric of material reality. That is why Professor Bloom's perceptions are so important and, in a millenarian setting, so timely.

Dinosaurs and disaster

Richard Pipes

MEMOIRS
By Mikhail Gorbachev
Doubleday, £25
ISBN 0 385 40668 1

Like most modern statesmen, now that his political career is over, Mikhail Gorbachev is preoccupied with his place in history. His *Memoirs* are neither as personal as those of his successor, Boris Yeltsin, nor notably reflective.

But they are filled with fascinating detail about events which transformed the international order, ending the Cold War and bringing democracy to Russia and her dependencies. Although conscious of his role in these events, Gorbachev is modest in his claims, depicting himself more as an instrument of inevitable historic forces than as an initiator of change.

Perhaps the most interesting parts of the book are those which deal with the atmosphere prevailing in the top circles of the Communist leadership. The most powerful men in the country were living in the same fear and mutual suspicion as their subjects. Gorbachev recounts the occasion when he invited Yuri Andropov, his mentor and head of the KGB, to his dacha for dinner. Andropov refused on the grounds that "tomorrow there would be all kinds of loose talk — who, where, why, what was said?"



Gorbachev: modest

The system grew sclerotic in part because of such fear and suspicion. When Gorbachev complained to Andropov that the average member of the Politburo was 70 years old and out of touch, Andropov responded "that older men were promoted because they had experience and lacked ambition... Whereas the young think only of their career and how to get ahead."

Gorbachev gives no indication of any strong commitment to Marxism-Leninism. Any such commitment crumbled when he saw the West during informal trips in the 1970s. He was amazed "by the open and relaxed attitude of the people we met and marvelled at their unrestrained judgment of everything", including the activity of their governments and their national and local politicians. Such belief as he had in the superiority of communism was further shaken by observation of the West's vastly higher living standards.

The collapse of communism, as he describes it, occurred with the force of a natural phenomenon. Describing East Germany in 1989, on the eve of its collapse, he says that it reminded him of an "overheated boiler with the lid tightly closed". In his own country, the instant the lid was raised to accommodate reforms, the boiler blew apart. Gorbachev does not maintain that he took office with any preconceived reform plan in mind: there was agreement that the economy had to be reformed. But the resistance of the bureaucratic forces required an appeal to the population by means of elections and referendums as well as the liberalisation of censorship. Once these steps were taken, the whole system unravelled.

A whole section of the book is devoted to foreign policy. If one is to believe Gorbachev, Moscow let go of its East European empire

because it confronted there overwhelming pressures for change which it did not want to suppress when it was trying to reform itself. In describing his difficulties in dealing with Western leaders, especially Ronald Reagan, who impressed him as a "political dinosaur", he shows no understanding for the West's mistrust of his initiatives, naïvely expecting that he could wipe out the legacy of decades of what he admits had been a Soviet policy of "opposing the rest of the world".

There are no major revelations about the events of 1991 which led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Gorbachev's fall from power. He firmly denies any connection with the August 1991 putschists and insists that the dissolution of the Soviet Union was an unmitigated disaster. Although he is generally fair to political rivals, he has nothing but loathing for Yeltsin whom he accuses of "deviousness bordering on treason, and blames for what he perceives to be Russia's endemic post-Soviet crisis."

Richard Pipes's *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive Will be published by Yale in November.*

The overall impression is of a monarch who, politically at least, has reigned in a manner remarkably free from error. In our post-deferential, *Spitting Image* age, she is still greatly admired, and the Golden Jubilee of 2002 will doubtless occasion a massive outpouring of genuine affection. "I must not take the easy way out" was her childhood motto (strangely reminiscent of Queen Victoria's "I will be good") and as this eminently fair and highly professional study reminds us, she never has.

The Queen with Mandela in July



The Queen with Mandela in July

ing the murderous truth about both men.

The power the Queen exercises over the assumptions and prejudices of the nation is as phenomenal as it is largely subconscious. In an age given to analysing our every psychological reaction, we have not yet fully appreciated the enormous influence this 57-year-old woman wields. In the realm of the unspoken givens by which the vast majority of Britons

live, the Queen rules as well as reigns. No less than 41 per cent of Britons have dreamt about her at some stage in their life. Usually the context is social, with the dreamer committing an embarrassing *faux pas*. So for all her well-attested ability to put people at their ease, she is the ultimate non-spiritual authority figure. Shelley believed poets were mankind's "unacknowledged legislators". Today it is this commander-in-chief of society's Respectable Tendency.

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Too far a stretch

Claire Messud

DISTANCE

By Colin Thubron
Heinemann, £15.99
ISBN 0 434 00257 7

ungraspable; Edward's love for her is doomed by its strangling intensity. In this instance, the turning point comes on a trip the lovers take to Indonesia, where Edward is tested, and falls short. There are, ultimately, dark consequences to his failure.

Distance, while slight, is atmospheric. Thubron's prose, at times overripe, captures Edward's disjointed alarm, his groping and fumbling in the labyrinth of memory. Edward's images of Indonesia are magnificent — a gift Thubron carries from his travel writing. Of diving with Jaqueline, for example, Edward recalls the subaqueous terrain: "The whole wall was fissured with petrified flowers,

sea-fans, gorgonians and starfish, and perforated by the soundless trumpet of euphorial. If we looked up we saw whole shoals suspended and translucent against the sunlight."

UNFORTUNATELY, neither Edward's British surroundings nor his passion for black holes can match this glory. Early on, before his mental vision returns, Edward marvels, "I can't imagine having been to Indonesia." Nor, in truth, can this reader: Jaqueline, who lured him there, remains too murky to comprehend. In spite of his devotion, she fails to live in the novel. Meanwhile, muted Edward suffers the curse of English reserve to an extreme, and unlike his predecessor Pasley, experiences no attendant insanity with which to fire his lukewarm spirit. Amnesia seems his ideal fate: it leaves behind pure potential. What he re-lives, in the end, neither kindles nor convinces.

Distance is a risky undertaking, and its risks are reminiscent of Thubron's earlier fiction. There, he has more than proven his success. It seems, then, a curious compulsion to revisit this familiar narrative — a compulsion doomed, perhaps, like Edward and Jaqueline, or Daniel and Sophia, from the outset.

Refusing to take the easy way out

Andrew Roberts

THE QUEEN

A Biography of Elizabeth II

By Ben Pimlott

HarperCollins, £20

ISBN 0 00 255494 1

background who might be suspicious of new, so-called designer diseases.

Bradford famously went into non-specific detail about Prince Philip's alleged lovers. Pimlott contents himself with references to "girlfriends" in the index which do not end at the 1947 marriage. "His head may occasionally be turned by a pretty face" is almost all Pimlott allows himself, before he returns to the activities of the famously taciturn Buckingham Palace press officer, Commander Colville, whose refusal to enter into even the most innocuous details about the Royal Family earned him Fleet Street's sobriquet "The Abominable No-Man". One is left rather nostalgic for that time of laconic briefings, when even lunch menus at official dinners were considered semi-classified information.

The result, though, is a serious political and historical work which neatly complements Sarah Bradford's more social and personal biography published earlier this year. There are fewer revelations, unless Princess Diana's remark to Charles "You will never be King. I shall destroy you" tells you anything about the Queen of Hearts you didn't already know. The lack of sympathy that the real Queen showed Diana over her bulimia is perhaps understandable for someone of her age and

Pimlott's criticism of the Queen's choice of Alec Douglas-Home over Rab Butler in 1963, when she was bamboozled by the wily old Macmillan, sitting up in his dressing gown in the King Edward VII Hospital for Officers, almost makes her into an *ex officio* member of what Iain Macleod later denounced as "the Magic Circle". This is going too far, although it must be accepted that an outgoing Prime Minister must be among the very worst people to consult for an objective judgment as to his successor. Far from regretting her loss of prerogative, as Pimlott assumes, the Queen probably sighed with relief when in 1965 the Tories decided to elect their leaders, rather than rely on the "emergency" process.

Although 1963 was her toughest call, there have been many other uncomfortable moments. She has had to undertake distasteful tasks, such as awarding Nicolae Ceausescu an honorary knighthood, or continuing for years to employ Sir Anthony Blunt, KCVO, despite knowing the murderous truth about both men.



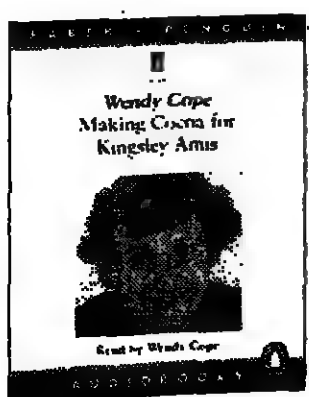
The Queen with Mandela in July

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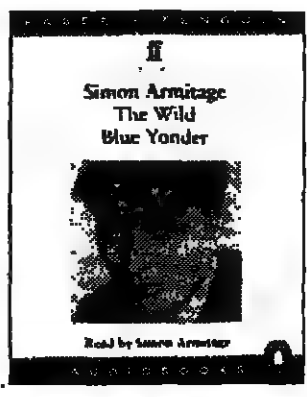
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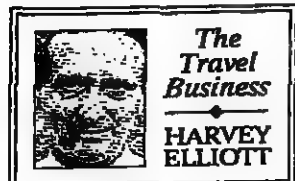


Return to Sorrento? Not yet, thanks

MORE THAN 7,000 people die on the roads of Italy every year, more than double the number in Britain. And after six days on the Italian Riviera I am surprised the figures are not higher.

Italy has been taken over by the car, lorry and motor-bike. To be a pedestrian in a town such as Sorrento is to offer yourself as a slow-moving target for macho young men in sports cars, screaming and buzzing scooters, and coach drivers who speed around corners on roads no more than a few inches wider than their vehicle.

The problem may be at its



worst in Italy, where once-remote towns such as Sorrento are being battered by the motor vehicle. But it is rapidly becoming a universal one.

Individual towns can do little to curb the threat of injury and pollution on the Continent's main roads. But they can do a lot to improve the quality of life for their own inhabitants and for the tourists taking short city breaks in ever greater numbers.

And an example of what can be done lies a few miles away from Sorrento across the Bay of Naples. On Capri, visitors' cars are forbidden. Transport is by a handful of licensed taxis, by cablecar or by bus. The streets and squares are left almost exclusively to pedestrians and the economy is booming.

Tourism chiefs from other popular tourist cities and towns would do well to study what Capri has achieved and to see whether it could be copied and even improved on.

Tour operators such as Thomson that feature Sorrento and claim to care about the environment could lead the way. Why take a coach from Sorrento to Pompeii along over-crowded, winding roads when the train is faster, cleaner, stops outside the ruined city and is much cheaper?

From next month, Thomson is offering twin-centre breaks in Sorrento and Capri. Thomson could also offer, whenever possible, train rather than coach trips. Such a move, especially if backed by others such as Citalia and the German giants Tui and Neckermann, could goad local councils into action.

If the tour operators and the local authorities continue to ignore the problem, few of the 538,596 visitors who filled the 93 hotels in the immediate area last year will bother to return to Sorrento.

Cheap air fares lure business travellers

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

CUT-PRICE airlines are wooing tens of thousands of business travellers from roads and railways to the fast-expanding network of domestic and European air services.

The growth in business air travel is also being enjoyed by scheduled airlines, which are spending millions of pounds on improved facilities for business travellers. But low-cost airlines such as EasyJet, Debonair and Ryanair are enjoying the biggest growth. Ryanair says 45 per cent of its passengers on the Stansted-Prestwick route travel on business.

A passenger survey shows it attracts customers from small businesses who pay their own fare or will make a speculative sales visit if low fares are available. Ryanair charges from £49 return to Prestwick compared with British Airways' or British Midland's round-trip fares of £240. Meanwhile, London City airport is enjoying a big increase in popularity. In September it increased the number of passengers by 23 per cent to 73,195 and more airlines are trying to join the 13 that already operate from the Docklands airport, serving a total of 18 European cities.

Air UK is increasing its frequency of flights to Amsterdam from the airport from

three to four a day from the end of this month and will transfer its Stansted to Rotterdam route to London City from October 21. "There is a perfect match between London City airport's passenger profile and that of Air UK's business customer," an Air UK spokesman said.

Debonair is offering flights between Luton and Copenhagen for £49 and between Luton and Rome for £69 one way. "Since revenue service started in June, our loads have been steadily building above our plan," the chairman, Franco Mancassola, said.

Air Jet, which provides a ticketless "turn-up-and-fly" service between London City and Paris, has reached its target of 1,000 passengers a month well ahead of schedule and is confident it can break even, mainly by attracting business passengers — 70 per cent of whom originate in France — within 18 months.

Throughout Europe, passenger traffic went up by 7.6 per cent in August compared with the same month of 1995. But Karl-Heinz Neumeister, secretary-general of the Association of European Airlines, warned that growth would be sustained only if new airports and air traffic control facilities were provided to keep pace with the demand.

South Africa opens up to cheaper holidays

By TONY DAWE

A HOLIDAY in South Africa for less than £500 has become a reality following deals which allow new airlines to fly routes into the republic which used to be dominated by British Airways and South African Airways.

Britannia Airways has begun charter flights from Gatwick to Johannesburg and Cape Town and has signed agreements with tour operators to offer cheap holiday packages to a country which used to be one of the more expensive to visit. The airline has been granted rights in the South African courts this week to sell half its charter seats on a flight-only basis.

Virgin Atlantic has also started scheduled flights three times a week from Gatwick to Johannesburg and its holiday

company plans to introduce packages for the 1997-98 winter season.

Britannia's deals include an agreement with SAR Travel of London which is offering a week in Johannesburg, from £499 and a week in Cape Town from £608 on a limited number of November flights.

Bluebird Holidays, which pioneered charter flights to South Africa, is offering a £349 return flight to Johannesburg this month which will increase by £100 next month. These prices compare with APEX fares of more than £700 on scheduled services.

WEXAS, the club for business and independent travellers, is also entering the South Africa bargain stakes by offering members a £399 return fare to Johannesburg.



The Vatnajökull glacier eruption is making a mint for the Icelandic tourist trade

Tourist boom for Iceland

By MARTIN SYMINGTON

TOUR operators to Iceland are reporting a surge of interest in the country as the drama of volcanic eruptions beneath Vatnajökull glacier goes on.

Steina Palsdottir, director of Arctic Experience, which takes more than 3,000 British tourists a year to Iceland, said: "We were inundated with calls on the morning after the eruption was first reported. Some people were merely checking that the holiday they had booked would be safe, but many more want to know if it is possible to see the volcano in action."

The situation is under review, but the answer, according to Ms Palsdottir, is yes. "We can arrange trips, though we have strict rules about

where individual travellers may and may not go. On flydrives, we insist that they do not travel east of Vík. We are also organising special escorted tours which will include a flight over the volcano."

The Vatnajökull icecap is half a mile thick and nearly 100 miles in diameter, covering the live Bardarbunga volcano which has been erupting since October 2. Clouds of volcanic ash are blowing northward, while a lava slick runs south, beneath the ice. The glacier is normally a popular destination for tourists who explore it by snowmobile. Now, not only is the glacier restricted, but also the entire region between it and the south coast.

"We simply do not know

what is going to happen next," said Sigurdur Sigurdsson, director of Icelandic Tourist Office's representative in London. "The icecap is melting and will eventually run south to the Atlantic, but when and how, and with what consequences, nobody can tell."

According to Mr Sigurdsson, many callers want to know whether it is safe to visit Reykjavik. "The capital is 300 miles away and unaffected," he said.

● Arctic Experience (01737 218800) is organising a five-day (four-night) special tour of Iceland from October 17-21, including a two-hour sightseeing flight over the erupting volcano; price £488.

Ski injury claims climb 40%

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

THE COST of medical claims for ski injuries has risen by more than 40 per cent in the past two years, jumping from an average of £431 a claim to £754, says Columbus Travel Insurance.

The company predicts that more than 700,000 Britons will ski this season and that 13,000 will have to return home early because of serious injury.

Although the number of injuries is expected to remain static, the cost involved is rising sharply.

June Philpott, marketing director of Columbus, said: "While more people are taking out travel insurance some are still failing to recognise its importance, especially for winter sports. Yet skiing without travel insurance is like trying to descend the piste without skis. Insurance is essential."

Some £18 million has already been spent on the Savoy, with the Front Hall restoration undertaken by designers David Linley and Nina Camp-

Suite dreams for £2,100 a night

By DAVID CHURCHILL

THE Savoy Group yesterday unveiled the first phase of a £62 million renovation of its London luxury hotels, including the restoration of the Front Hall at the Savoy Hotel to its original 1924 design and the opening of two new penthouse suites at Claridge's, believed to be London's most expensive at £2,100 a night plus VAT.

Ramon Pajares, managing director of the group, which also owns the Berkeley and Connaught hotels, announced a Perfect Room Programme to ensure standards are maintained. "This involves two or three people spending several hours in a room making sure everything is in top condition," he explained. All rooms will get this treatment at least twice a year.

Some £18 million has already been spent on the Savoy, with the Front Hall restoration undertaken by designers David Linley and Nina Camp-

bell. New air conditioning has been added and the plumbing modernised.

"It was important to get the essentials right for our guests," Mr Pajares said.

More than 2,000 new telephones have also been installed throughout the group, with modern systems such as voicemail now available.

The two new penthouse suites on the seventh floor of Claridge's have a private roof terrace with views overlooking London. They each have two bedrooms, two bathrooms, dressing room, large sitting room and dining facilities, a private elevator and a personal butler. The rooms were designed by Veere Greeney.

At the Berkeley, the rooftop swimming pool is being refurbished and is due to reopen, along with a new health spa, early next year. Two new executive boardrooms have been added.

Ferry merger could bring monopoly

By STEVE KEENAN

MERGER talks between Brittany Ferries and P&O European Ferries could leave holidaymakers with no choice on crossings to western France next year.

The two are locked in negotiations about a possible merger along the lines of the P&O-Stena Line deal announced last week on the "short-sea" Dover and Newhaven routes. Unlike the Dover deal, in which P&O is the lead partner, taking 60 per cent of profits, Brittany Ferries will be the dominant partner on the western routes.

Brittany has more than half the five million passenger market on four western routes, while P&O takes roughly two million on two routes and Stena Line the rest on its Southampton-Cherbourg route.

But Stena is considering the future of the route. A fast ferry is an option or more ships could be deployed from Dover. Should Stena axe the route to concentrate on the Irish Sea, a merged company would be the sole operator on the western Channel.

However, a joint merger would certainly attract the attention of the Office of Fair Trading. Pooling of services with no equity deal is also being considered as a fallback. David Longden, Brittany's operations director, pledged this week that no routes would be cut except Poole-St Malo.

The two companies would also co-operate on routes to northern Spain and a new route may be opened to Biarritz. P&O has extra ships available following capacity cuts at Dover.

Fares would also start to rise again after hitting rock-bottom this year. Mr Longden said: "They have to rise if the future of the company is going to be secured, but they won't go up dramatically."

This year's price war on the Dover Straits had a dramatic knock-on effect on holiday fares from the West Country to France. Brittany cut prices on all four of its routes by nearly 40 per cent. A 21-day return cost £138 on the Poole-Cherbourg and Portsmouth-Caen routes compared to £225 in the brochure.

Brittany is looking to improve on last year's losses of £10 million and this summer instigated a business plan following the pledge of £40 million from the French Government over three years. Ninety jobs have gone in France.

However, merger talks are more labourous than the P&O-Stena Line deal. Brittany is a French-owned company and clashes in cultural styles have resulted. But a decision will be made by the end of the month in time for 1997 brochures.

Fares for the winter season to March 5 will be released tomorrow.

BA fights French air 'plot'

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

BRITISH Airways has begun a legal battle over an alleged plot to prevent it from competing with state-aided French airlines.

BA claims that a bid by AOM, a French regional airline, to buy the near bankrupt Air Liberté is designed to stop foreign airlines from obtaining take-off and landing slots at key airports and to curb competition on French regional services.

BA is calling on the European Union to block "with the utmost urgency" the offer, which BA says is an illegal use of state aid. The British airline has long been frustrated in its attempts to break into the French market. Last year it made an unsuccessful bid to buy loss-making AOM, an offshoot of the state-owned bank Credit Lyonnais.

The bank was also losing money and a record state injection of cash was approved to keep it afloat. As part of the deal it had to dispose of its holdings in AOM. That has not taken place and, according to BA, the money given to keep AOM afloat is being used instead to buy another loss-making airline Air Liberté.

BA claims that its attempts to buy AOM or even to obtain details of how much Air Liberté is worth have been blocked and that French officials openly admit that whatever happens, foreign airlines will be prevented from obtaining slots at Paris Orly airport.

A BA spokesman says: "All we want to do is to bring air travellers in France the same benefits that British passengers enjoy from free and open competition. Yet we seem to be frustrated at every turn by the French authorities."

Iberia cuts domestic air fares

By JUNKU VARADARAJAN

THE state-owned airline Iberia has started a price war in Spain, sending fares for domestic flights plummeting to an attractive new low.

Iberia last week announced a new fare — the *Estrella*, or "Star" — which is more economical than the present cheapest fare, which already gives flyers 50 per cent off the normal tariff.

The new fare will be on offer for the rest of the year on 52 different routes throughout Spain. These include flights to the Balearic Islands and the Canaries.

To qualify for *Estrella* prices, flyers must make their bookings at least two days before departure, and have a stay at their destination for a minimum of four days and a maximum of 14. Children are entitled to further discounts.

Some examples of return fares are: Madrid-Seville, 11,900 pesetas (about £60); Barcelona-Las Palmas, 18,700 pesetas; and Bilbao-Palma de Mallorca, 15,900 pesetas.

TRAVEL ON SATURDAY

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Visitors urged to escape to Colditz

By DAVID ALTHEER

A NEW battle is being fought for Colditz, the Saxonian castle that became a prison for British and other Allied officers during the Second World War. The medieval fortress is famous for the large number of men who tried to get out, but now the Germans want to attract people in.

Built in 1046, the castle had fallen into decay after almost half a century of East German ownership. But this spring a Colditz Castle Community (CCC) was formed with the help of the Colditz Association of British veterans and the UK-based Colditz Society to raise funds to make it a prime tourist attraction.

Though there has long been a museum in the castle, suggestions such as turning the castle into a hotel have foundered because of bureaucratic inertia and doubts about helping the town to cash in on its grim wartime history. But

Herr Jens Mahlmann, CCC's chairman, says: "History has made Colditz a place of international interest."

The existing Escape House exhibition is to be moved from a small room to two floors, where it will show videos including the 1954 John Mills feature film, *The Colditz Story*, and a BBC documentary, photographs taken by the Nazi security police and other wartime items. Work has already started on a restaurant on the "Glider Floor", from where an escape attempt was made by prisoners who built a glider. The castle will also be connected to electronic media. A home page on the Internet has been created at the suggestion of Dr Antony Anderson, the son of William Anderson, who repaired Douglas Bader's artificial legs in the castle forge when they were PoWs.



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HOTELS

THREE of London's top hotels — Claridge's, the Connaught and the Savoy — are joining with 120 others around the world on October 25 to host a dinner at £65 a head to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Auguste Escoffier, director of the Savoy kitchens from 1890 until 1897. The last *Dinner d'Epique* was held in July, 1914, in 140 cities. Details: Claridge's, 0171-629 8860; Connaught, 0171-490 7070; Savoy, 0171-836 4343.

A NEW Year's Eve gourmet dinner dance with overnight accommodation is available for £105 a person, based on double occupancy, at the 36-room Mitre Hotel in Hampton Court, Surrey. Details: 0181-979 9088.

GUESTS staying at the Park Hall Hotel & Village resort near Preston will receive one free ticket per night of stay to the nearby Camelot Theme Park or Granada Studios. Cost is £34.50 a person a night through Superbreak Mini Holidays. Details: 01904 679 490.

THE Grosvenor House Hotel in London has pre-Christmas room offers from December 3 to 15 at £170 a night, based on double occupancy and not including breakfast. A special brochure detailing lunch discounts in the hotel restaurants has also just been published. Details: 0171-499 6363.

SHEEN Falls Lodge in Kenmare, County Kerry, has midweek packages available this month from £95 a person

including accommodation, breakfast and dinner in the hotel's Michelin award winning restaurant. Details: 00 353 64 41600.

HOTEL Promotions Services has a free-night offer when staying at selected hotels for more than two nights in most continental cities. Details: 0181-446 0126.

WARNER Holidays has a number of weekend breaks available at its holiday villages, including a three-night stay at the Bembridge Holiday Village on the Isle of Wight from November 1 at £89 a person half-board. Evening entertainment is provided by cabaret artists of the calibre of Little and Large. Details: 01705 492121.

THE NEXT wine dinner at the Langham Hilton Hotel in central London on October 22 features the Lolois Winery of California, which recently provided the wines at a White House dinner. Cost is £45 a person. Details: 0171-636 1000.

GLENEAGLES Hotel has a two-night golfing break available through Leading Hotels of the World from October 31 including lunch, dinner and two rounds of golf, with transfers from the local station. Details: 0800 181123.

A TRADITIONAL Hogmanay three-night break is offered by the Invercauld Arms Hotel in Braemar for £297 a person. The break includes a grand gala dinner and dancing and a haggis hunt on New Year's Day. Details: 01339 741605.



The Ponte Vecchio in Florence. You could take a weekend break in the beautiful Renaissance city for £360 a person

FERRIES

A THREE-day Hoverspeed return from Dover to Calais costs £39 for a car and two passengers or £35 on the Folkestone-Boulogne route. A five-day ticket costs £49 and £39 respectively (£10 supplement on all Saturday sailings). Details through Eurodrive: 0181-324 4000.

SWANSEA Cork Ferries has ferry crossings and three nights £88 available to coincide with the Fringe Jazz Festival in Kinsale and the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival, both from October 25 to 28. The package costs £115 a person to include car crossing. Details: 01792 456116.

THREE or six-day crossings are available between

Belfast and Stranraer on Sun-Cat Scotland until January 6 at £75 and £95 respectively. Fares are available in both directions on certain sailings, valid for a car and four passengers. Details: 0345 523523.

MINICRUISES aboard Scandinavian Seaways include Hamburg departing Harwich on October 14 and Esbjerg, Denmark, on October 15, both to include two nights on ship, breakfast and a sightseeing tour. Prices from £59. Details: 0900 333111.

EUROLINK has £39 crossings for a car and two passengers on its route from Sheerness to Vlissingen, Holland — extra passengers £10 a person. Details: 01795 581000.

FLIGHTS

TRAVELBUG has negotiated special fares with Emirates, departing from Manchester for Dubai on October 17. A return economy ticket will cost £327 and a business-class seat £1,079. Passengers must return to the UK by November 30. Details: 0161-740 8998.

THE low-cost airline AB Shannon has lowered executive fares between London and Shannon. Business-class fares start from £188 and excursions with a minimum stay of two nights are available from £126. Details: 0345 464748.

FIRST and business-class passengers flying to London with Saudia are being offered use of a mobile phone. The phone is free but there's a

daily insurance charge of £1.75 and calls are charged at 25p per unit. Details: 0171-629 6202.

DEBONAIR has a £49 one-way introductory fare for its new service from Luton to Copenhagen. Details: 0800 146200.

MEMBERS of Japan Airline's Mileage Bank loyalty scheme can now redeem points for British Midland flights within Europe. Details: 0171-408 1000.

LUFTHANSA is offering an extra 2,500 to 7,500 frequent-flyer miles when members book its new Frankfurt-Shanghai route. Details: 0800 300777.

HOLIDAYS

A WEEKEND break in Florence, the city virtually synonymous with the Renaissance and still one of Europe's best-preserved, is on discount this month from October 17. The price of two nights' bed and breakfast accommodation at a four-star hotel, including return flights, has been reduced from £415 to £360 a person. Details: 0171-686 5533.

DISNEYLAND Paris short breaks are available from Sally Holidays for £95 a person this month for couples travelling with two children under 12. The offer includes three nights' accommodation, two-day passes to the park and a return car crossing on Le Shuttle. Details: 0181-395 3030.

MENORCA for £99 for a week's self-catering holiday with a flight from Gatwick next Monday is on offer from Unijet. Details: 0900 336336.

HALF-TERM week is still available in many of Country Holidays' properties, including a converted barn near Ross-on-Wye in Hereford & Worcester, sleeping four and costing £281 for the week beginning October 19, and part of a converted watermill in the Yorkshire Dales, sleeping six and costing £314. Details: 01282 445095.

BUDDING Tim Henmans and Clare Woods can take part in a tennis tournament as part of a week with Solo's at the four-star Atalaya Park Hotel, Marbella. Prices start from £690 a person including half-board and use of many other sports facilities. The offer includes a flight from

Gatwick on October 27. Details: 0181-951 2800.

FAR EAST Travel Centre is offering a three-centre nine-night holiday for 1979 a person with hotel accommodation in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Singapore, and Malaysia Airlines flights. Departures go up to December 14. Details: 0171-414 8808.

EILAT for £289 a person for a week in the Marina Club "apartment", with a flight from Gatwick on October 21, is on offer from Longwood. Details: 0181-551 4494.

FREE CAR HIRE in Cyprus is on offer for holiday-makers booking hotel or self-catering breaks for at least a week from November 1 with Odyssey Holiday. Two weeks in a five-star hotel costs from £449 a person, including return flights from Luton. A fortnight's self-catering costs from £249. Details: 0181-343 0000.

SAVINGS of £50 a person on ski holidays booked before November 1 are available from Ski Esprit, bringing the cost of a week on the slopes down to £248, including return flights and accommodation in a catered chalet. Details: 01252 616789.

CHRISTMAS in Barbados for £589 a person, including children's half-price and a fortnight's self-catering accommodation at the Sunset Crest Resort, St James Beach — with return flights — is on offer from Cranbourne Tours. But you must book before next Tuesday. Details: 0181-462 1105.

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A wealth of quite wonderful things

Next Tuesday, the sixth annual Lapada Arts and Antiques Fair comes to the Royal College of Art in Kensington, west London, and the wealth of items on offer virtually guarantees that this will be the best show ever. Lapada is this country's largest association of art and antique dealers and nearly 60 of its members will be exhibiting for sale a fine array of just about everything you can think of: silver; jewellery; ceramics; glass; paintings; rugs; clocks; bronzes; textiles; and — most strongly of all — a great deal of superb furniture.

Among my favourite pieces is a pair of chinoiserie glass-fronted display cabinets — these are Chipendale style and period from Ireland (c. 1770) and the patina and proportions are excellent: about £30,000 from Cavendish Fine Arts. The Country Seat is primarily known for the best quality 19th-century furniture designed by prominent artists, designers and architects and this year they are offering a magnificent example of the genre — a large oak doorcase by A.W.N. Pugin in the form of a glazed bookcase lined with beautifully tooled leather dummy book spines. It was probably made by cabinetmakers J.G. Crace (best known for their work in the Brighton Pavilion); a unique and covetable piece at £15,500. The same company is also offering an outstanding and handsome pair of large Carrara marble lions (c. 1860). These are attributed to

Preview day at an arts and antiques fair revealed a host of treasures waiting for discerning buyers, says Joseph Connolly

Alfred Stevens and are priced at £17,500 the pair.

Among the smaller items of furniture, I particularly like a Windsor elbow chair in yew with an elm seat (c. 1850) — a handsome and sturdy piece with a good cruciform splat, and identical to the chairs in Oxford's Bodleian Library reading rooms: £1,700 from Bugle Antiques, which also has a wonderful selection of alternative Windsor chairs ranging from £1,200 to £6,000. Attractive, too, is a rare George II jardinière, c. 1753. This splendid octagonal lidded wine cooler, with its original lead lining, is mahogany and stands four-square on unusual carved cabriole legs, terminating in hoofs: £3,500 from Butchoff Antiques.

The most dazzling examples of silverware are from Marks Antiques: four mighty George III silver entrée dishes of 1816, on antique Sheffield plate-warming stands by Matthew Boulton: £175,000, the set. Among a fine selection of porcelain at the fair, an elegant pair of early 20th-century Royal Worcester ewers is outstanding — graceful in pierced white with gold embellishment and in pristine condition: David Main is offering the pair for £13,000. More Worcester of the same period

(c. 1910) is offered by Valerie Main — a pair of 12in-high painted pot-pourri vases with covers (£12,000).

Two different timepieces stand out: a rare and unusual tortoiseshell mantel clock in Louis XV style (c. 1870), as ornate as you would expect and with typical rococo ormolu decoration — £2,850 from Arenski Fine Art. And rather more to my taste is a stained frosted-glass clock by René Lalique c. 1900. This is alive with birds and flowers and stands on its original wooden plinth — good value at £2,800 from Art Nouveau Originals.

An Aubusson carpet is offered by Lida Lavendar: an extraordinary and complex colour scheme perfectly complements the architectural motifs and geometrical design: it is mid-19th century and £48,000. Smaller and cheaper items include a rare Bliton enamel tea caddy from Rogers de Rin (c. 1780). This decorative item, adorned with colourful repoussé flowers, is priced at £2,500. The floral theme is continued in a fine series of mid 17th-century copper plate engravings of tulips, irises and lilies — a set of 24, but available singly at £600 each from Dinan & Chigline.

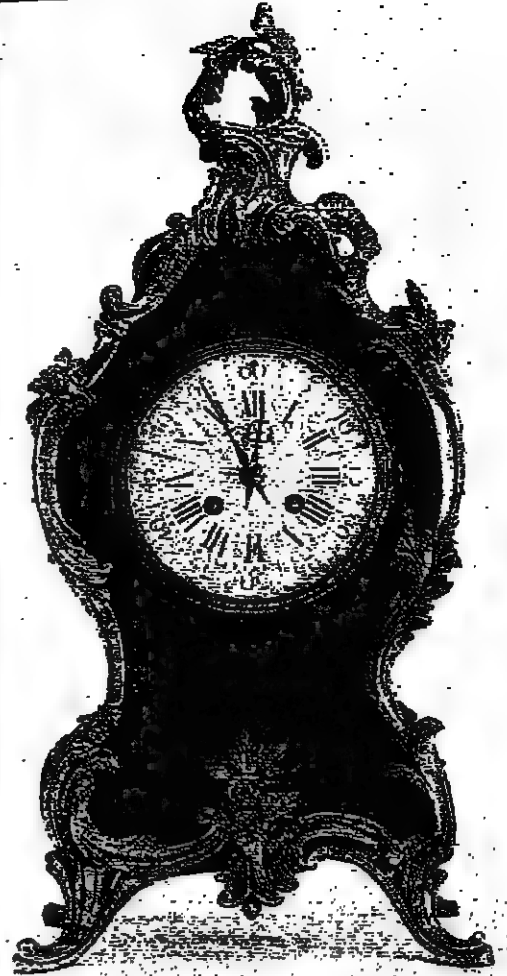
Two contrasting displays at the fair, for viewing only, are alone worth the price of entry. One features the 9ft-tall copper statues Humility and Charity — two of a group of sculptures removed for renovation from near the summit of the Albert Memorial; newly regilded in 23.5 carat gold leaf, they are a stunning sight. Also on view are other decorative features temporarily removed from the Memorial, including intricate lead work sparkling with newly restored brightly coloured glass jewels.

The other exhibition is a tribute to the fact that from its inception, the Lapada show has been held in the Royal College of Art — here is a special selection of pictures from the college's own collection of past alumni. The war years are brilliantly represented by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, John Piper and Eric Ravilious — a lovely painting by him of his fellow student Edward Bawden. The exhibition continues chronologically with Bomberg and Auerbach and, by way of such as Bratby, on up to the stars of the 1960s — Peter Blake, Bridget Riley, Patrick Caulfield, Allen Jones, R.B. Kitaj and, most notably, Hockney. What with this and the fine gathering of antiques for sale, Lapada is just about as glittering as a fair can be.

● The Lapada Show is at the Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7 from October 15 to 22. Weekdays 11am to 5pm, weekends 11am to 6pm. Admission £10 single or £16 double.



A pair of Carrara marble lions (£17,500, J.G. Crace) and a rare tortoiseshell clock (£2,850, Arenski)



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SQUASH

Shenton displays emerging talent

FROM COLIN McQUILLAN
IN PETALING JAYA
MALAYSIA

YESTERDAY'S charge by six English players into the third round of the Perrier women's world open squash championship here was inspired not by Suzanne Horner, the national champion, who progressed later in the day, but by Tracey Shenton, the 19-year-old British junior champion.

Shenton shook the world open seedings with a resolute 70-minute 9-4, 9-7, 8-10, 6-9, 9-6 second-round win over the No 13 seed, Rebecca Macree, of Essex, which earned her an unexpected encounter with the top-seeded defending champion, Michelle Martin, of Australia, today.

In the only all-English match of the day, Shenton, from Stone in Stafford-

Results 45

shire, led the combative Macree 2-0 and 7-2 in the third game, and then fought back from 5-0 down in the fifth to record her best senior result.

"I have been training back home for 12 weeks to be ready for this tour," Shenton said. "I wanted to start with the World Open and to be as fit as possible. Now I have nothing to lose against the defending champion, so I can go for it again."

Horner overcame Rachel Grinham, of Australia, 4-9, 9-6, 8-2, 9-1 in 41 minutes while Sue Wright, another member of the England squad, beat Jade Wilson, of New Zealand, 2-9, 9-5, 9-1, 9-0.

Wright and Fiona Geaves meet today in the bottom half of the draw, probably for the right to play Horner in the quarter-finals. Also in the bottom half, Linda Charman, who yesterday defeated the former world No 2, Danielle Drady-Harte, 5-9, 9-0, 9-1, 9-0, faces Carol Owens, of Australia.

In the top half of the draw, along with Shenton, is Cassandra Jackman, who defeated Toni Weeks, of Australia, 9-0, 9-5, 3-9, 9-5, yesterday with a forceful performance marred only by an awkward collision in which she cracked her nose against her own racket, sustaining an injury serious enough to require ice treatment later.

Briton maintains perspective as title pursuit nears finishing straight

Hill ready to write happy ending

Oliver Holt ponders questions of success and failure with

Formula One's world champion-in-waiting

It is close now, so close, Damon Hill says, that he could drive round Suzuka in the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday with one hand on the wheel and still get the point he needs to win the Formula One world drivers' championship. One point, just one point: the thought hovered like an uninvited diner at his table as he ate his last supper here in Hong Kong on Tuesday night, before yesterday's journey to Japan.

It hung there in the bitter-sweet recollections of his wife, Georgie, the memories of the sacrifices both have made to get him so near to his goal. She talked about their wedding day, about the hurried reception at the London Rowing Club, Damon looking at his watch because he was worried they would miss the flight that was taking them to France for a Formula 3000 race. They spent that night in a shabby hotel behind Dijon station.

It was there, too, in the good wishes of the Governor, Chris Patten, and a small group of his friends as they sauntered over from their table at the end of the evening in one of the colony's trendiest restaurants and shook his hand. They all said they would be watching as he tried to secure that point.

Most of all, though, it was there in Hill's mind, in his attempts to grasp the enormity of this achievement. He was anticipating the victory already, trying to gauge the effect it would have on his life. But, always, that point was there, getting in the way, forcing him to confront his fear of losing, casting uncertainty over the joy of winning.

I don't know if it is the love of winning it or the fear of losing it that motivates me more," Hill said. "In some ways, the thought of losing has to be the stronger motivating factor because we all have instincts and the ultimate loss is death, actually losing your life. That has got to be more motivating than another rung up the ladder."

"But there is also this other thing which is fear of winning. That is to do with not knowing what to do next. If I was to win, I would not have the object of my strivings any more. It is achieved. What is there after that? Then perhaps I will be lost because I no longer have a goal. My whole life has led to this point. Should I achieve my goal, what then?"

"It is like the saying that it is better to travel than to arrive, that the satisfaction comes



Hill and Georgie, his wife, above, have both made great sacrifices in pursuit of his world title dream. She was with him in Hong Kong this week as he prepared for the final, decisive race of the season

from the struggle." Then a smile and his laughter lightened his thoughts. "Right now, I think I could deal with that, with winning it," he said.

"It is impossible to sit here and say just what it would mean. The championship has been my objective and what I have put everything of myself into and what I have made all my sacrifices for, things like our wedding, my time, my hours in the gym. Since I started racing, I have been pushing myself towards the top and this is the top."

"In some respects, it is wrong to regard it as the most important thing in your life because my family is most important and really and truly life will go on whatever happens. But it is what I want and it has consumed every emotion



that I have and my entire being, and I would hate to... well, that is the thought that is not entertained."

Hill got here a week ago, keen to arrive early so that he had plenty of time to banish

the jet lag that clings to him more than most. From their suite atop the Peninsula Hotel, he and his wife, who arrived on Sunday so as to minimise the time spent away from their children, Oliver, 7, Joshua, 5,

and Tabitha, 15 months, can see the sweep of the crowded harbour and the mountain in the New Territories at the base of which she lived when her father was stationed here in the Army 20 years ago.

They left yesterday afternoon on a four-hour flight to Nagoya with Hill's manager, Michael Breen. From there, a minibus took them to their hotel in the grounds of the Suzuka circuit, two hours away. His holiday is behind him now. His thoughts and his nerves are focused on Sunday's race. Georgie is so tense she does not think she will even be able to watch it.

All this despite the fact that Hill, who will race for the TWR Arrows team next season, will start Sunday's grand prix as the overwhelming fa-

vourite to clinch his first title. He has seen a championship slip away from him before in the final race, in Adelaide two years ago, when Michael Schumacher drove him off the road. For him to lose out a second time would be too cruel. Even Schumacher feels Hill deserves the title.

The only man who can deprive him of the championship, his Williams-Renault team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, has to win the race to have a chance of overhauling the Englishman. Even if Villeneuve achieves that, though, Hill needs only to finish sixth to score the point that will give him the glory instead.

Only rogue elements can stop him. A collision with a backmarker, plumes of smoke from a blown engine; these are the images of his nightmares. They are, he said, things over which he has no control. His only real dilemma about the Japanese Grand Prix is how hard to try to win it.

"Qualifying will be crucial," he said. "It is a fairly safe bet that Jacques and I will be on the front row together but, if I can put it on pole, that will

'If I drove round with one hand on the wheel, I could come sixth'

give me a better chance of avoiding trouble at the start. This will be my last race for Williams and I would dearly love to win it because you never know how long it is going to be before you get a chance to win another race.

"But I have to weigh that up against the bigger prize, which is the championship. If I just drove round with one hand on the wheel, I could come sixth. That's all I need to do but, in a way, it's more difficult to do that than to win the race. If I don't win it, I am working on the assumption that Jacques will."

"The point about this weekend is that Jacques and I are really in two different races. My objective is to win the championship and, in order for Jacques to win the championship, he has to win the race. I only need one point if he does that. We are on two different agendas."

"He is off the hook as far as having to be cautious or tentative. He has no option but to go to Suzuka, and try to win the race. It is a different frame of mind driving with nothing to lose. I have led the championship all season and I am still there to be shot at. But now I have a pretty straightforward job to do to win it. My sights are set on finishing off that job."

Australia ponder spinning options

AUSTRALIA may deploy a three-pronged spin attack for the one-off Test match against India, which begins today, after seeing the state of the pitch at the Ferroz Shah Kotla stadium in New Delhi. Brad Hogg, a left-arm spinner, and Peter McIntyre, a leg spinner, are in the squad of 12.

Australia could also call on Mark Waugh's off spin after he took six for 68 in the second innings of Australia's warm-up match against the Indian Board President's XI that ended in a draw on Monday.

Title triumph

Tennis: Chris Wilkinson, of Hampshire, has won the Lawn Tennis Association circuit title by reaching the semi-finals of the Autumn Satellite Masters in Sheffield. He beat Arvind Parmar, the national junior champion, from Hertfordshire, 6-4, 6-2 and meets Robbie Koenig, the No 5 seed, from South Africa, today.

Samantha Smith, the new British No 1, is one of three home players to get a wild card for the Texaco Ladies' Challenger event at the Welsh National Tennis Centre in Cardiff next week. The others are Alison Tordoff, from Kent, and Monique Javer, a former British No 1.

Christmas fare

Rugby league: Leeds and Bradford Bulls are to play a pre-season match at Headingley on Boxing Day. St Helens and Wigan have also taken advantage of the Rugby Football League decision to allow Christmas derby fixtures, despite the sport's move to a spring-summer season.

Dowd doubts

Hockey: Alan Dowd, the Ireland captain, is a doubtful starter for the World Cup preliminary tournament semi-final against New Zealand in Cagliari today. Dowd sustained a back injury in the 4-2 defeat of the United States last Thursday.

Losses denied

Olympic Games: Games officials yesterday denied reports that the Atlanta event had lost money. Francois Carrard, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) director-general, said the IOC had not yet received a final financial report.

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RACING: FASCINATING RHYTHM'S VICTORY BRINGS UP CENTURY FOR WARREN PLACE TRAINER

Cecil offers another classic pointer

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

TRAINERS are creatures of remarkable habit, none more so than Henry Cecil. Down the years, he has often waited until the leaves have gained their autumnal hue before dispatching a potential classic prospect to Nottingham racecourse.

Oh So Sharp, the outstanding triple crown winner of 1985, began her career at Colwick Park, stood little more than a furlong from the River Trent. Slip Anchor went on to win the Derby after a race-course debut in Robin Hood.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: LOVE HAS NO PRIDE (4.00 York)
Next best: Multicoloured (2.30 York)

country and 12 months ago Cecil sent Dushyant, runner-up in this year's Derby and St Leger, to the well-tended Midlands venue where he made a winning start.

By the time the horsebox carrying Fascinating Rhythm arrived at Nottingham for the EBF Fillies Stakes yesterday the world and his wife appeared to know that the staminate daughter of Slip Anchor was Cecil's latest seasonal offering.

Carrying the colours of Helena Springfield, the company that enjoyed 1,000 Guineas success in 1979 with One In A Million, she was sent off a



Fascinating Rhythm, ridden by Eddery, makes a successful start to her career in the EBF Maiden Fillies Stakes at Nottingham yesterday

shade of odds-on and favourite backers, never had an anxious moment once Pail Eddery went for home about three furlongs out.

Fascinating Rhythm galloped on strongly for a workmanlike success which not only provided Cecil with his 100th victory of the season but also attracted a 33-1 quote for next year's Oaks from Coral.

That price could be made to look generous given the post-race remarks of Eddery and

Simon Sweeting, assistant to Cecil, who was at Goff's sale. "She was a bit green but will improve a lot for that. She has a lovely temperament as well," Eddery reported.

Sweeting added: "Pat was delighted with her and she really looks like a filly for next year. She had to work today but she has beaten fillies with good form. I would not want to compare her with anything at home but she has always looked a pretty useful animal."

Ever since the days of Robin Hood and Friar Tuck, Sherwood Forest has been loath to give up its secrets but if Jeremy Glover's hunch is correct the legendary woodland may be partly responsible for his remarkable record in the Cambridgehire.

Glover, who won the race for the fourth time from just five runners with Clifton Fox last Saturday, explained yesterday: "I train only about five miles from that famous old

oak tree where Robin Hood and his merry men supposedly met and ever since I started training, my horses have always been better in the autumn. Why, I'm not sure, but it may be something to do with the pollen in the forest."

"The horse are definitely better in the autumn, so I thought that if I got a good handicapper the thing was to find a decent handicap in the autumn — the Cambridgehire."

The trainer added: "If they are improving at this time of year you are one step ahead of the handicapper."

Whether Clifton Fox is still ahead of the official assessors is a moot point. The progressive four-year-old has been raised 4lb for his comfortable 2½ lengths success at Newmarket. Glover is now considering running him in a listed race at Newmarket early next month or in the November Handicap at Doncaster.

Bosra Sham stays in training

BOSRA SHAM, the 1,000 Guineas winner, will miss the Breeders' Cup meeting later this month, but will stay in training next season.

Wafic Said's filly, who lost her unbeaten record when runner-up to Mark Of Esteem in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes, will have her final race of the year in the Dubai Champion Stakes at Newmarket on October 19.

"Bosra Sham" definitely stays in training," the owner's racing manager, Tim Blythe, said. "The plan is the Champion Stakes and as long as she pleases us in her work she is a definite runner."

Meanwhile, at Longchamp

today, the John Gosden-trained Decorated Hero runs in the listed Prix Eugene de Savoie. Decorated Hero was the fourth of Detton's seven winners in a day when he ran away with the Tote Festival Handicap at Ascot last month. He will be ridden by Thierry Jarnet in the mile contest.

He is one of three British raiders in a six-runner field, along with Ed Dunlop's Cadeaux Tyrol (Tim Sprake) and David Loder's Master Boots (Olivier Peslier). "Pick of the horse team could be Cadeaux Tyrol," said the French trainer. "He is a good runner, but he was a good second to Byzantium at Deauville last time out."

Longchamp's feature race on Sunday, the Grand Critérium, sees the return to action of Revogue. Peter Chappie-Hyam's colt who won the Prix de la Salamandre last month, is one of the leading contenders for next year's 2,000 Guineas. By Fairy King, he shares the same sire as Arc winner Helissio and Chappie-Hyam's Irish 2,000 Guineas winner, Turle Island.

He is one of five British-trained horses among the 13 acceptors, completed by the John Gosden pair, Benary The Dip and King Sound, along with Papaya and Referendum.

"Revogue is a definite runner. He is very well and I think he has improved on his last run. He worked really nicely the other day," Chappie-Hyam said.

King Sound, who got off the mark at Newbury last month, is the most likely of the Gosden duo to run. Referendum, beaten half-length by Desert King in Ireland's National Stakes, may switch to the Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket next week.

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2.10 RATHERLEIGH MARES ONLY MAIDEN HURDLE (22.200, 2m 6f) (4 runners)
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-1048-1049-1050-1051-1052-1053-1054-1055-1056-1057-1058-1059-1060-1061-1062-1063-1064-1065-1066-1067-1068-1069-1070-1071-1072-1073-1074-1075-1076-1077-1078-1079-1080-1081-1082-1083-1084-1085-1086-1087-1088-1089-1090-1091-1092-1093-1094-1095-1096-1097-1098-1099-1100-1101-1102-1103-1104-1105-1106-1107-1108-1109-1110-1111-1112-1113-1114-1115-1116-1117-1118-1119-1120-1121-1122-1123-1124-1125-1126-1127-1128-1129-1130-1131-1132-1133-1134-1135-1136-1137-1138-1139-1140-1141-1142-1143-1144-1145-1146-1147-1148-1149-1150-1151-1152-1153-1154-1155-1156-1157-1158-1159-1160-1161-1162-1163-1164-1165-1166-1167-1168-1169-1170-1171-1172-1173-1174-1175-1176-1177-1178-1179-1180-1181-1182-1183-1184-1185-1186-1187-1188-1189-1190-1191-1192-1193-1194-1195-1196-1197-1198-1199-1200-1201-1202-1203-1204-1205-1206-1207-1208-1209-1210-1211-1212-1213-1214-1215-1216-1217-1218-1219-1220-1221-12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FOOTBALL: YOUNGSTERS' PROGRESS LEAVES FORMER ENGLAND PLAYER FACING UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Rocastle adrift as forgotten man of Stamford Bridge

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

CHELSEA have made light of their extensive injury problems this season, rising to sixth place in the FA Carling Premiership despite an ever-crowded treatment room. They have done it, too, without the help of David Rocastle, a sublimely-talented midfielder player at his peak, yet one who, apparently, now has no more than a bit-part role in the reserves.

Unlike many of his teammates, Rocastle, 29, has been fit, ready and available for selection by Ruud Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager. As the casualties have mounted at Stamford Bridge, so has his expectation of a return. He has not played since breaking a toe in the 3-0 defeat against Blackburn Rovers a year ago — his solitary appearance last season.

Yet the call has not come. "I've been back in training since June and not missed a day," he said. "I don't really know what else I can do to get a first-team place. I'm trying not to feel sorry for myself, but it's very disappointing."

Rocastle's career has gone into gradual decline since his heyday at Arsenal, where he won winners' medals in the league championship, twice, and the Littlewoods Cup. He was also capped 14 times by England. However, a move to Leeds United never worked out and neither did his switch to Manchester City, in a swap deal involving David White worth another £2 million, 16

months later. He joined Chelsea for £1.25 million two years ago, but has since been plagued by injuries and loss of form, restricting him to only 40 appearances. He scored two goals in the reserves' 4-2 win over Brighton on Monday, in the Avon Insurance Combination, but still appears to be on the outside looking in. "I suppose it's time to start thinking about my future," Rocastle, who has 18 months

Wolverhampton Wanderers have signed Jens Dowd, the German midfielder player, on loan until the end of the season. They will pay SV Hamburg £200,000 for his services for the remainder of this campaign and a further £1 million if he then continues his career at Molineux.

left on his contract, said. "I still feel I can do a job here and all I want is to be given a chance. I don't think Ruud has really seen me play."

In contrast — and suggesting that it may be in Rocastle's best interests to look elsewhere — Gullit has given the nod of approval to Jody Morris, 17, a midfielder player, and Mark Nicholls, 19, a striker, by promoting them from Chelsea's youth ranks.

Morris has won honours with the England schoolboy and youth sides, captaining the under-17s; he made his debut for the under-21s when

he came on as a substitute in the 0-0 draw against Poland at Molineux on Tuesday night and has played seven times for Chelsea this season, scoring one goal.

"There's been a lot of nice things said about me and Mark and it's great that the manager is showing he's prepared to give a chance to the youngsters," Morris said. "We've got plenty of good young players here and I'm sure you might see a few more of them before the season is out."

Morris, a former Stamford Bridge ballboy, like Nicholls, still struggles to take in his swift progress. "I'd hoped to play in a few pre-season games, but I didn't really expect to be starting in the first team," he said. "It's great experience, each game is a bonus."

Glenn Hoddle, the former Chelsea manager, gave him every encouragement before he left to become England coach. "He always let us train with the senior players and, by doing that, you can't help but improve," Morris said. "You are getting good advice every day and it's got to make you a better player."

High hopes and a higher profile, perhaps, but Morris is keeping a sensible perspective. "I don't think it will affect me," he said. "There's enough people here to put you back in your place if you get any big-time ideas. They all make sure you don't get out of your pram."



Rocastle was a familiar figure during his heyday with Arsenal and England

Perez aims to make Romario pay

They make the most telling contrast in Spanish football. One, an international celebrity and World Cup winner; the other, a nonentity outside his small hometown. One, the veteran of many sweetly-struck goals; the other, a 21-year-old playing his first season in the Spanish first division. One is paid £2,300,000 for a year's work, making him the best-paid footballer in Spain; the other earns only £20,000, a good £13,000 less than any other player in the first division.

In football terms, Romario and Antonio Alvarez Perez come from different planets, perhaps even from different solar systems. Yet they play in the same league and will soon square up against each other on the same turf.

Romario, the Brazil forward, is a moody genius who plays for upmarket Valencia

Tunku Varadarajan on a mismatch of the day coming up in the Spanish first division

and lives in a giant hilltop mansion some 25 miles inland from the Mediterranean sea. Alvarez, known to his fans and mother as Tito, plays for Extremadura, the minnows of the Spanish league. The second of four brothers, he lives with his parents and milks the family's 20 cows every day.

A simple fact should put the contrast between the two still more starkly. Extremadura's annual budget is just £1 million more than Romario's annual salary. But does all this make young Tito? "No, not any more. When I stepped onto the pitch for the first time and faced all these multi-million-peseta signings, I was impressed. Now, I couldn't care less."

Tito was born and raised in

Almendralejo, the town of 25,000 people whose unfancied football team is playing for the first time in the Spanish first division. The fairy-tale promotion story has, this season, turned slightly sour, with six defeats in his six games. But Tito has not lost faith. "A victory, surely, is only a matter of time. Then, on a roll, who can tell what will happen?"

The young footballer is philosophical about his status as the worst-paid player in the league. "I do what I love to do every day, and on top of that I'm paid for it. My unemployed friends all tell me that I'm privileged." Others, however, have more sharp-edged observations to make. Ironically, one of them is the

president of Extremadura, Pedro Nieto.

Nieto said: "My boy is as professional as Romario is. And I'm sure that he lives more sportingly than the Brazilian." Nonetheless, Tito is still being paid on the terms of his old three-year contract, concluded when Extremadura were in the second division. Why has the player's salary not been raised a wee bit? "We just haven't got the cash," Nieto said.

Spain's first division is now strewn thick with extravagant-paid foreign stars, like Romario. The Brazilian does not even have to pay rent for his villa as it has been lent to him by a rich Valencia supporter. There are no cows to milk, of course, unlike at Tito's place. But Tito has no bodyguards. Romario has several, who guard him round the clock. There's the food for thought in that.

Impressive display puts Butt in frame

BY RICHARD HOBSON

PETER TAYLOR, the England Under-21 manager, believes that Nicky Butt is close to joining his club colleagues, David Beckham and Gary Neville, in the senior ranks after a resolute performance against Poland Under-21 on an extraordinary night at Molineux on Tuesday. "I have been impressed with his attitude and he played very well," Taylor said.

Wolverhampton Wanderers officials convened yesterday morning to discuss the way a parcel of sandwiches, wrapped in silver foil and deposited in a wastepaper basket in the John Ireland Stand, provoked a bomb scare and caused a 24-hour delay.

The European Under-21 Championship group two qualifying match finally

kicked off at 10pm in front of 3,183 patient spectators who had waited outside the ground in driving rain until an army bomb disposal unit conducted a controlled explosion shortly after 9pm.

Taylor said from the outset that he wanted the game to go ahead last night but Edward Lorens, the Poland manager, felt originally that it should have been postponed until yesterday morning. Lorens eventually recognised the logistical difficulties of such a switch but admitted that his players did little more than sit anxiously waiting.

It was no surprise, therefore, that England started the stronger, and had the two best chances of the 0-0 draw. Riccardo Scimeca, of Aston Villa, had a penalty saved, and Emilio Heskey, the Leicester City forward, hit a post.

Italy provide assistance for Bosnia

ITALY will play an international football match against Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sarajevo next month. Walter Veltroni, Italy's deputy prime minister, will accompany the squad to Sarajevo for the match on November 6.

Mario Pescante, head of the Italian Olympic Committee, said: "The match at Sarajevo stadium is another major step towards the rebirth of sport in a country which has suffered one of the most horrifying civil wars."

The country of Italy has been instrumental in assisting Bosnia's World Cup campaign — the Italian football federation has offered the use of Bologna's stadium for all Bosnia's "home" matches, the first having taken place on Tuesday night, against Croatia, which Bosnia lost 4-1.

Primo Nebiolo, the Italian head of the International Athletic Amateur Federation (IAAF), organised the first major athletics event there last month, in the Solidarity Meeting for Sarajevo. IAAF money helped to rebuild the Kosevo stadium in the Bosnian capital that will also host the football match.

FOOTBALL RESULTS

<p>WORLD CUP: European qualifying group four: Estonia v Scotland — match abandoned after Estonia team failed to take the field (in Tartu). Group nine: Albania 0 Portugal 3 (in Tirana).</p> <p>EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP: Qualifying group nine: Albania 2 Portugal 4 (in Tirana).</p> <p>Tuesday's late results:</p> <p>EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP: Qualifying group one: Bosnia 3 Croatia 1 (in Mostar). Group two: England 0 Poland 0 (at Molineux). Group four: Sweden 4 Austria 1 (in Goteborg). Group five: Israel 1 Russia 0 (in Herzliya). Group seven: San Marino 1 Belgium 5 (in San Marino). Group eight: Ireland 4 Macedonia 0 (at Dalymount Park).</p> <p>NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Luton 1, Barnet 3, Brentford 0, City 0, Second division: Peterborough 1, Notts County 3, Wrexham 2, Shrewsbury 1.</p> <p>SCOTTISH LEAGUE CHALLENGER CUP: Benetton 1, St. Johnstone 4, Mirassol 2.</p> <p>WORLD CUP: European qualifying group one: Bosnia 3 Croatia 1 (in Mostar). 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GOLF: LURE OF ST ANDREWS ENSURES FORMIDABLE OVERSEAS CHALLENGE FOR DUNHILL CUP

Scotland hoping for glorious twelfth

By JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THE twelfth Dunhill Cup starts at St Andrews this morning and hopes are high that, as Scotland bid to make an honourable defence of their title, their chances of doing so will not be overshadowed by more of the extreme weather that has hit this tournament in the past. On occasions in days gone by, the wind has cut to the quick and thermal underwear, ski hats and gloves have been the order of the day. The Old Course is not the coldest golf course on earth but there have been days at this event when it has felt like it.

In the Kingdom of Fife yesterday, the sun shone benevolently, though a wind roared around forcibly enough to make its presence felt. Golfers from the 16 participating countries were able to prepare for this event in the knowledge that the autumn

equinox, the moment when day and night are of equal length all over the world, had passed without an undue temperature change.

It is not only players like Andrew Coltart, of Scotland, Nick Price, the 1994 Open champion, and Colin Montgomerie, captaining the Scotland team, who admit to getting a buzz from playing on the Old Course. It is a curmudgeon indeed who travels the road eastwards from Leuchars and whose spirits are not raised at the first sight of a spire or a bell tower or a battlement in the place the Scots refer to as the "auld grey toon".

When the Open was here last year, large stands were dotted all over the course and it seemed as though every shop had managed to come up with some angle that made its wares applicable to golf and golfers. The narrow streets were thronged. There was a

real sense of a town being en fête. Now the cheering throngs have left, the streets are quieter but the place still retains the feel of a town given over to golf. This, of course, is the extra appeal that accrues to

any event held here. Another attraction almost as great as the Old Course itself is the 17th, the Road Hole, perhaps the most famous hole on the most famous golf course in the world. It exerts its influence at

all times, the difficulty of its 461 yards not being noticeably diminished on a calm day from the threat it poses when a wind is blowing. "It's a par four and three-quarters," Price said. "A five is not bad and a four is very good."

"In the 1978 Open, the Road Hole bunker was probably the hardest in the world," Price continued. "It was higher than it is now, the roll off was steeper and there was a bigger catchment area. I would say that on a scale of one to ten, it was a ten then and now is down to an eight."

The hole has changed a little for this week's event. "At the Open the rough on the left was much thicker than it is now," Ernie Els, captain of the South Africa team, said. This makes it easier to play the hole down the left from the tee and to the left of the bunker with the second shot. That was the way Phil Mickelson played it in the Open last year and now,

making his first appearance as a member of the United States team, he is determined to play it the same way this year.

Mickelson, Mark O'Meara and Steve Stricker, who are ranked first, fourth and fifth respectively in the United States money-list, are a formidable team and the top seeds. Greg Norman, Steve Elkington and Wayne Riley, of Australia, are the No 2 seeds. The England team, made up of Barry Lane, Jonathan Lomas and Lee Westwood, is not seeded for the first time.

It was Mickelson who put the appeal of golf at St Andrews into perspective. "It is not just the golf course," Mickelson said. "The town of St Andrews adds to the lure of the golf here. The place has the Road Hole, all those golf shops. It is not something that could be duplicated. It is a very special, unique place."



Price: relishes playing the Old Course

DUNHILL CUP
Group one: 12.30: M O'Meara v C Rocca, 12.40: P Mickelson v E Cantoria, 12.50: S Stricker v S Gragnaniello, 1.00: SPAIN v ENGLAND, 1.05: I Gledits v W Westwood, 1.10: M A Jiménez v J Lomas, 1.20: D Borge v B Lane.
Group two: 1.30: ZIMBABWE v INDIA, 1.35: A Johnstone v A Sher, 1.40: M Morley v G Gird, 1.50: N Price v J Sjöberg.
Group three: 1.55: SCOTLAND v SWEDEN, 2.00: A Coltart v P Haddleton, 2.05: R Russell v P Spillard, 2.10: C Montgomerie v J Sandberg.
Group four: 2.15: SOUTH AFRICA v CANADA, 2.20: V Westler v R Todd, 2.25: E Els v R Gledits, 2.30: R Gledits v J Ralston.
Group five: 2.35: IRELAND v WALES, 2.40: D Clarke v M Houdart, 2.45: P McGinley v P Allcock, 2.50: P Harrington v P Price.
Group six: 2.55: NEW ZEALAND v GERMANY, 3.00: G Wetherby v H P Threl, 3.05: G Threl v T Gledits, 3.10: F Heide v S Stricker.
Group seven: 3.15: AUSTRALIA v JAPAN, 3.20: W Riley v N Connell, 3.25: S Elkington v K Takem, 3.30: G Norman v N Mehlert.

Civil servants hope to improve account in final reckoning

By MEL WEBB

FACELESS bureaucrats? Anonymous drones? Not the four civil servants who walked into Rockmount Golf Club in Belfast yesterday and calmly put their organisation into the national final of the Times Meehan Corporate Golf Challenge for the second time in four years.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association reached the final in the inaugural year of the Challenge in 1993, and they signally failed to cover themselves with glory. To be precise, they finished



last. This time there is a grim determination to do much better. The team in that first year was composed of four good players who, when the big occasion called, did not do

justice to their ability. None of the quartet who will be playing in La Manga this year appeared in that team, but they will be picking the brains of their predecessors in the six weeks leading up to the national final. On occasions like this, a bit of advanced planning never goes amiss.

The winning team in this Ireland final — Eamonn McCarron, Gerry Boden, Roy McGrath and Jim Johnston — were reliability itself. Their plan was to aim for 4½ Stableford points a hole — 81 for the 18 holes. They achieved their target, and more, with 87, to win by two points from ICL, who, in an intriguing subplot, beat their computing rivals Digital and Unisys into third and fourth places, with 83 and 82.

The civil servants started on the 10th and the highlights of their round came on their fourth and sixth holes, the par-four 13th and par-five 15th, where they scored seven points each time. On the 13th, McCarron hit a four-iron and eight-iron to four feet and made the uphill putt for a net eagle two, worth four points, and Johnston hit four-iron, five-iron and got up and down from a bunker pin-high on the left for a net birdie and three points.

McCarron also featured on the second seven-pointer, striking his five-iron third shot to 25 feet, from where he holed his birdie putt for another net eagle. Boden hit two drivers ten yards short of the green, chipped and two-putted from ten feet for a net birdie.

McGrath did not figure in either of those holes — he saved his best golf for his inward half and played much better than any ten-handicap member has any right to expect. A member of the Dunmurry Club, he covered the nine holes in a gross one over par, putting some startling figures down to a newly-acquired driver that is giving him



Billy Alexander, of Wormald Ansil, considers his limited options on the 18th yesterday

greater accuracy and more length off the tee.

"It was exceptional scoring for me," he said. "I had only played at Rockmount once before, and that was last year, so it wasn't that I was all that familiar with the course."

The two seven-point holes apart, the team relied on steadiness rather than fireworks, and, having completed a solid day's work, then had to wait for the better part of 90 minutes to see if the 16 teams still on the course could overtake them. "You dared not hope," Johnston said, "but, somehow, you just could not

stop your mind drifting back to what might have been. It wasn't a pleasant experience."

Apart from their heroics, a small piece of Challenge history was made with the first hole in one in a regional final. The hero in question was Gordon Patterson, of HPSS, who scored the 170-yard 16th with a six-iron. He was duly grateful for the fact that he was not held to the traditional duty of a hole-in-one — buying drinks for all present. It was a relieved Patterson who went home clutching his piece of Waterford Crystal with bank balance undented.

SCORES

87: Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association, 85: ICL (North), 83: Digital Co Ltd, 82: Unisys Ltd, 81: Department of Economic Development, CML Ltd, 80: Brookvale Kilbride, R J Maxwell & Son Ltd, 79: First National Building Society, 77: Robert Keyes Group, 76: Fleet Financial (NI) Ltd, 75: Alex Stewart Partnership, 74: MacNaughton Blair & Co Ltd, 73: Northern Ireland Electric plc, Sherwood Systems Ltd, 72: O'Mahony Family, DFDS Transport Ltd, 72: Satchwell Grant, Imperial Tobacco, 71: HPSS, Sunbelt Bakery, 70: Short Bros plc, 67: Wormald Ansil Ltd, 65: Ireland Financial Services.

CRICKET

West Indies pair cleared for counties

COURTNEY WALSH and Carl Hooper will be allowed to continue playing for their English counties — Gloucestershire and Kent respectively — even though they are among 20 players to be offered contracts by the West Indies Cricket Board, aimed at keeping them in the Caribbean (Pat Gibson writes).

Walsh, who is captain of both Gloucestershire and the West Indies, has already assured his county that he will not be prevented from signing a new two-year contract with them, while Hooper, who still has one year left on his existing four-year agreement, has intimated that he is ready to sign a one-year extension.

The board, while stressing its intention to improve its domestic game, is, however, prepared to make allowances in the cases of Walsh and Hooper, who are the only regular West Indies Test players with county sides.

Steve Camacho, the board's chief executive, said: "We have to respect people who already have county contracts and, in the first instance, it certainly will not disadvantage them from playing for the West Indies."

Back in the driving seat

The Controllers' Concerts. Radio 3, 7.30pm.

We'll never know whether more brickbats than bouquets have been tossed at the men who have masterminded the musical output of old Third Programme and its successor Radio 3. It's a matter of record, not speculation, that their tastes have influenced ours, even though Classic FM has now spectacularly entered the equation, and its influence continues to grow. Three past BBC music controllers and their influence on successive Thursdays, beginning tonight with Sir William Glock's selection. He chooses works by Mozart and three composers with whom he was closely associated when he was in charge between 1959 and 1973 — Pierre Boulez, Roberto Gerhard and Elliott Carter.

God in a White Coat. Radio 4, 7.30pm.

The title given to Geoff Watts's inquiry into spiritual healing needs a question mark. By its very nature, there must be as much faith as fact in any conclusions about the efficacy of this kind of complementary therapy. However, the need for a question mark is dispelled by the ever-increasing number of healers. They attribute the success of their methods to what they call divine love energy. The "official" medical profession has taken a long time even to contemplate the possibility that spiritual healing can work. Now some family doctors are adding it to the services available at their surgeries.

Peter Divalle

RADIO 1

FM Stereo 6.30am Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiteley 2.00 Nicky Camp 4.00 Mark Goodier 7.00 Evening Session 9.00 Collins and Macneil's Hit Parade 10.00 Mark Radcliffe 12.00 Clare Sturgess 4.00 Chris Warren

RADIO 2

FM Stereo 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.00 Alex Leslie 5.05 John Durn 7.00 The Newer Huddles 7.30 David Allen. The best in country music 9.00 Paul Jones 9.45 Gospel Train, with Carol Pemberton 10.30 Alan Smeaton 12.05am Adrian Foughan 3.00 Steve Madden, and at 3.30 Pause for Thought

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports, incl 5.45 Wake Up to Money 6.00 The Breakfast Programme, incl 6.55 and 7.55 Racing Preview 8.55 The Magazine, with Brian Hayes, incl 10.25 News from Europe 12.00 Midday with Mair, incl 12.35pm Moneycheck 2.05 Ruscoe on Five, incl 3.45 Entertainment News 4.00 Nation-wide, incl at 5.45 Entertainment News 7.00 News Extra, incl at 7.20 Sports Bulletin 7.30 On the Line 8.05 Inside Edge A look inside the week's sporting headlines with Rob Bonner 9.05 SportsAmerica, with Alton Byrd 9.55 America Grail 10.05 News Talk, with Paul Reynolds 11.00 Night Extra, with Valerie Sansford 12.05am After Hours — Early Call 2.05 Up All Night

TALK RADIO

5.00am Early Breakfast 7.00 Paul Ross 9.00 Scott Chesham 12.00 Anna Rasmussen 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Driveline, with Peter Dinkley (FM) / Robin Barnes (AM) 10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00pm 1.00am Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

All times in BST. News on the hour 5.30 Europe Today 6.30 Europe Today 7.05 The World Today 7.30 Sports International 8.10 Words of Faith 8.15 On the Shelf: Hershewe 8.30 Network UK 9.15 Composer of the Month 9.45 Health Matters 10.05 Business 10.15 Sports International 10.45 Sports Roundup 11.30 BBC English 11.45 On the Shelf: Hershewe 12.30pm Meridian 1.15 Britain Today 1.30 Island, Faith and Power 4.05 Sports Roundup 4.15 BBC English 4.30 News in German 5.30 Business 5.45 Britain Today 5.10 World Today 6.25 Take Five 6.30 News in German 6.45 Sport 7.30 Islam, Faith and Power 9.01 Outlook 9.25 Words of Faith 9.30 John Peel 10.05 Business 10.15 Britain Today 10.30 Meridian (Books) 11.30 World Today 11.45 Sport 12.05am Take Five 12.15 Soundbytes 12.30 Shanghai Beat 1.30 Good Books 1.45 Britain Today 2.30 Outlook 2.55 Words of Faith 3.30 Thirty-Minute Drama: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde 4.15 Sport 4.30 Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Griffiths 8.00 Mike Read 9.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susannah Simons 2.00pm Lunchtime Concerto Delia (Piano Concerto) 2.00 Hack Bayle 6.00 Classic Newsnight 6.30 Sports, Lookout (Scania in E minor) 7.30 Travel Guide, Sarawak 8.00 Evening Concert: Featuring the winning recordings from the 1996 Gramophone Awards, which will be announced today 10.00 Michael Mappin 1.00am Sally Peterson Jeremy Clark

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 'n' Jon's Breakfast Experience 9.00 Richard Skinner 12.00 Graham Dene 4.00pm Nicky Home 7.00 Paul Coope (FM) / Robin Barnes (AM) 10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00pm 1.00am Ian Collins

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGee, includes: Beethoven (Piano Sonata in F minor, Op 57, Appassionata); Szymanowski (Violin Concerto No 1); Kreisler (Die Nacht ist schön); Vivaldi (Recorder Concerto in F, Op 10 No 1, La Tempesta di Mare); Torkel (Run) German (Symphony No 2 in A minor) 9.00 Morning Collection, with Carole Young, includes: Walton (Fugue Suite No 1); Mozart (Oboe Quartet in F, K370); Tchaikovsky (October, Autumn Song); Bartok (Harmónia) 10.00 Musical Encounters, with Fiona Talkington, includes: Adrian La Roy (Has tu Point Veil); Grainger (Scandinavian Suite) Mendelssohn (Piano Concerto No 1 in G minor); Arst of the Week: Moura Limpany, piano, Roland Dyrya (Tango on Skis); Wallace (Symphonic Poem No 6 Villon) 12.00 Composer of the Week: Smetana, Vrána Nationalism, String Quartet No 1 in E minor (From My Life, 4th mvt), Festival Overture in D, Cesta Ples; Haskins Jar; Macbeth and the Witches 1.00pm News: Opera Matthew Double Bill, Martinu (Comedy on the Bridge); The Merry Widow, soprano Alexander Gunther, baritone, and Herbert Dudzik, bass, Ulmann (The Broken Jug); Hask Delman, bass, Mario Hoff, baritone 3.00 Three Score Years and Ten, Looking back at the history of Choral Evensong, which has been broadcasting since 1928 3.05 Yehudi Menuhin Plays Bach, Cello Suites: No 1 in G, BWV1007; No 3 in C, BWV1009 3.50 The BBC Orchestras, BBC Philharmonic, under Matthias Bamert, Dohnanyi (Symphonic Minutes; Symphony No 2 in E) 5.00 Music Machine, with Tommy Pearson 5.15 In Tune, with Anthony Burton. A special edition featuring music and interviews with this year's Gramophone Award-winners 7.30 The Controllers' Concerts. See Choice 9.35 Third Words, Sarah Maguire listens to fellow poets reading their work on the third Programme and discusses radio's influence on poetry 10.00 Music Restored, George Pratt introduces performances from the 1950s York Early Music Festival. This programme features a recording from All Saints' Church, Newark-on-Trent, Leeds (97) 10.45 Night Waves, Michèle Roberts celebrates National Poetry Day with an exploration of contemporary trends in poetry in Britain and abroad. Plus a report from the Dublin Theatre Festival 11.30 Composer of the Week: Steve Reich at 60 (1) 12.30am Jazz Notes, with Gordon Cruickshank. The second part of an interview with Lalo Schifano 1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod, including 5.00 Sequence

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing, incl Weather 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today, incl 7.25, 8.25 Sport 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.40 Changing Trains, Steven Norris, MP, former Transport Minister, reads his memoirs (4/5) 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Face the Facts, with John Wale (1) 9.30 Common Ground 10.00 Daily Service (LW) 10.15 On This Day (LW) 10.30 News: King Solomon's Carpet, by Barbara Vine, adapted by Nick Fisher 10.30 Women's Hour 11.30 From Our Own Correspondent 12.00 News: You and Yours 12.25pm Questions of Taste, Chris Kelly hosts the light-hearted culinary quiz, featuring Jennifer Paterson, Fern Britton and Simon Fanshawe 12.55 Weather 1.00 The World at One 1.40 The Archers (1) 5.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News: Life in the Day, A play by Moya O'Shea 3.00 News: The Afternoon Shift 4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope, Paul Allen reports from the first week of the Dublin Theatre Festival 4.45 Short Story: The Falkirk Mailster, by Douglas Young 5.00 PM, with Chris Lowe in Bournemouth and Charlie Lee Potter in London 5.45 Party Political Broadcast, by the Labour Party 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 And I'm the Queen of

Sheila, Ken Livingstone, MP, chairs a panel game about lies and deceit 7.00 News: The Archers 7.20 God in a White Coat. See Choice 8.00 20/20: A View of the Century, John Tunstall concludes his personal perspective on the last 100 years by exploring the question of belonging and the meaning of the last century. identity we all wear (10/10) (1) 8.45 The Writer's Day Out. The series in which writers best known for creating fiction become reporters for the day 9.00 Does He Take Sugar? The programme for people with disabilities 9.30 Kaleidoscope 9.58 Weather 10.00 The World Tonight, with John Peel 10.45 Book at Bedtime. I'm Here I Think, Where Are You? The actor Timothy West reads letters written over a period of 30 years, to his wife Pamela Stables (4/5) (1) 11.00 The American Wife, by Richard Nelson. Zoe Wanneraker stars as the American wife in a play specially written for her by one of Britain's most popular American dramatists, with Anton Lesser and Emily Richard (1) 11.30 Art Lab: Robert Robinson talks to portrait painters (1) 12.00 News, incl 12.27am approx Weather 12.30 The Late Book: Two Girls, One a Gazette, by Barbara Mercer. Read by Joanna Monro (1/2) 12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.5-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.2-90.2, RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6, LW 198. 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 893, 899. WORLD SERVICE. MW 846, LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.6, MW 1187, 1215. TALK RADIO UK. MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamee.

GRRREAT EXPECTATIONS

GRRRAHAM'S
PORT

Just roll it round your tongue.

W. & J.
GRAHAM'S
THE PORT OF AUTHORITY

The scenic route to a predictable destination

Last night's *Great Railway Journeys* (BBC2) was a very entertaining programme, especially if you're not a fan of the genre. The point and counterpoint Ben Okri set out by train across Europe to visit the geographical Arcadia in Greece, and the result was a dramatic film full of unanswerable questions, delivered with poetic weight. "Have we lost our way? Have we lost our childhood?" Okri asked. "Is Arcadia a stage on the journey, or is it the destination? Do we travel to escape, or quest?"

Arcadia is a metaphor, you see, for contentment and peace — but we all know that. Getting the thoughtful Okri to hurry along was the trouble, and munitally blue-pencilising his platitudinous voice-over was a thankless job. Whole paragraphs could be replaced by "There's no place like home" or "It's better to travel hopefully than to arrive," but Okri

had to think things through, and we had to watch and admire his long day's journey into exile. Is a well-tempered garden a small version of Arcadia? Hmmmm. Okri discussed this novel idea for a lengthy few minutes, with a nice French train driver, while at home I exploded with impatience.

Still, it's a long time that has no turning, and this journey got better. I admit, when concerned with the anecdotal as opposed to the profound. In Greece, Okri interviewed a former undertaker from Cheltenham — now all permanent tan, hippie sandals and iron-gate locks. Leading bodies into coffins had made him appreciate that living is more than being alive, so he had run away and become an artist. "Wouldn't it be magnificent," Okri said, "if we could all be inspired, in life, by death?"



Lynne Truss

And on the final stage of his journey, he watched Greek landscape unfold from the back of a speeding train — a peculiar viewpoint which inspired him, and made a memorable scene. When travelling forwards, he said, things pass us and are gone forever; whereas from the back of the train they stay with us, they always exist. But for his occasion he swooped back to the banal again. "What are we looking for?" he intoned practically, dignifying the duggled well beyond its potential. What are we looking for? What do we find? Arcadia maybe is a state of mind. But of course it is. Ben, of course it is.

In telly cookery circles, you would imagine a moratorium might exist: no more fish recipes in Cornwall until the waiting list at Rick Stein's restaurant shrinks to less than three months. So it was a measure of the sheer nerve of *Two Fat Ladies* (BBC2) that, for their first venture on screen, the eponymous terrify-

ing Irish women, Jennifer Paterson and Clarissa Dickson Wright, roared into Mevagissey on their Wallace-and-Gromit motorbike with sidecar and started demanding only from the fisherfolk. An imperious manner was once considered a drawback on television, but not any more. Now it's marketable. "Let's ask him," says Clarissa, as they plot together along the quay in wellies. The

hair unfavourably plastered to their heads by spray and rain. "Who? That kneeling man?" says Jennifer. The only surprise is that she doesn't then call out, "You! Yes, you kneeling man!" to get his attention. A slight turn on the delivery adds even more entertainment value, and is evidently genuine. "I like having vermouth around," admits Jennifer in the kitchen, later — as she adds it to her scallop piece. "Because I'm not tempted to drink it."

Still, television broadens the mind: it's an escape and a quest at the same time — but, phone up a post and get him to make a programme about it. For a while last night you could experience the world from a very particular point of view — of big, well-spoken women in ugly clothes and no make-up who huddle over a big poker-like kitchen instrument and say "What a wonderful weapon" and "Stick it in the burglar!". The

- 6.00am Business Breakfast** (16475)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (Ceeley) (47749)
9.00 Breakfast News (Ceeley) (47749)
9.30am News (Ceeley) (47749)
10.30am News (Ceeley) (47749)
11.00 News and weather (Ceeley) (47749)
11.05 Conference Live Includes speeches from Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor. Includes news at 12.00 (9318129)
1.00pm News and weather (Ceeley) (4036)
1.30 Regional News (57320923)
1.40 Neighbours (Ceeley) (44450045) **2.00 Call My Bluff** (3038) **2.30 The Terrace** (s) (316) **3.00 Inconceivable** (s) (8774)
3.30 Little Bear (s) (7321638) **3.55 The Chapmunks** (s) (1635238) **4.20 Julia Jeliff and Harriet Howe** (Ceeley) (s) (8784571) **4.35 Smart** (Ceeley) (s) (3885638) **5.00 Newsround** (Ceeley) (2444519) **5.10 Byker Grove** (Ceeley) (s) (8462923)
5.35 Neighbours (s) (Ceeley) (s) (376132)
6.00 News and weather (Ceeley) (395)
6.30 Regional news magazines (497)
7.00 Watchdog The consumer magazine (Ceeley) (s) (7855)
7.30 EastEnders Kathy asks Grant for his help in her search for the truth (Ceeley) (s) (381)
8.00 Animal Hospital Rolf Harris explores the work of the RSPCA's Harroworth Memorial Hospital (Ceeley) (s) (9403)
8.30 The Hello Girls Miss Marriot leaves a cake in the supervisor's room. When the girls try to find out what the cake is for, disaster follows (Ceeley) (s) (5010)
9.00 Political Broadcast by the Labour Party (173749)
9.05 News Regional News and weather (Ceeley) (580855)
9.35 The X Files "Nesher" Manley, on death row for more than 11 years, goes to his death row to seek revenge on all his enemies. When a guard dies a few days later, Mulder and Scully are called in to investigate the possibility of reincarnation (Ceeley) (s) (402744)
10.20 They Think It's All Over Nick Hancock compares a game of wit and sporting knowledge "with a difference" with team captains David Gower and Gary Underwood, who are joined by regulars Rory McGrath and Lee Hurst. Tonight's guests are the comedian Jo Brand and the footballer Chris Waddle (Ceeley) (s) (119229)
10.55 Question Time David Dimbleby chairs this week's debate on Bournemouth. Tonight's guests are Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, Emma Nicholson, Liberal Democrat MP and Ruth Lea, head of the Institute of Directors' Policy Unit (s) (921126)
11.55 Film: Andy Anderson All Talk (s) (921126)
12.30 Film: Which Way to the Front? (1970) Jerry Lewis comedy in which a neurotic millionaire has a strong desire to do something to help the war effort. Directed by Jerry Lewis (524541)
2.05am-2.10 Weather (226256)

- 5.00am Open University: Easing the Pain** (7405768) **6.25 Health and Disease** (7504040) **6.50 Managing the Health Service** Who Calls the Shots (9075300)
7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (5242768)
7.30 Alvin and the Chipmunks (4619749) **7.55 Blue Peter** (5772126) **8.20 Noddy** (2340923) **8.35 Lassie** (27300)
9.00 The IT Collection (2459497) **9.25 The Art** (5552621) **9.45 Writing and Pictures** (1913213) **10.00 Playdays** (24300) **10.30 Storytime** (1951584)
10.45 The Experiment (3478861) **11.05 Space Ark** (866584) **11.15 Welsh History — Famous People** (9795687) **11.35 Landmarks — Investigating Local History** (2805107) **11.55 Belfast Film: Christianity in Britain** (1975213)
12.15pm Hello aus Berlin (368213)
12.30 Working Lunch (36827) **1.00 Unleashed** (8330710) **1.25 Mad About Music** (1732470) **1.45 Numbertime** (5733030) **2.00 Noddy** (1848381)
2.10 Conference Live Includes speeches by Michael Heseltine, Deputy Prime Minister and Gillian Shephard, Education Secretary (219107)
3.55 News (5311942) **4.00 Today's the Day** (710) **4.30 Ready, Steady, Cook** (294) **5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show** (9237768) **5.40 True Laid's Tricks of the Trade** (281233)
5.50 More Secret Gardens (733359)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (Ceeley) (s) (638381)
6.45 Conference Talk (s) (76300)
7.30 Hack Follows five students from college to fully fledged journalists (s) (923)
8.00 The Works: A Death in Hollywood (Ceeley) (s) (7045)



Michelle Newman goes east (8.30pm)

- 8.30 Top Gear** Michelle Newman goes to Prague to find out if the new Czechia will put paid to all those Skoda jokes (Ceeley) (s) (3652)
9.00 Neverwhere: Down Street An urban fantasy Richard and Dor won the sacred key for the Angel Islington but the Marquis has been killed. So they have to journey into the depths of London without him and come face to face with the worst nightmare, and a traitor in their midst (Ceeley) (s) (1652)
9.30 The System: The Old Guard (Ceeley) (s) (884861)
10.25 A Party Political Broadcast by the Labour Party (206636)
10.30 Newsnight (Ceeley) (440861)
11.15 Late Review (969126)
12.00 The Limit: The Remotest Robot (24362)
12.30am-2.10 The Learning Zone

- 12.30am-2.10 The Learning Zone**
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CYCLING 45

Boardman continues quest to stay top of the world

SPORT

THURSDAY OCTOBER 10 1996

GOLF 46

St Andrews lures formidable list of challengers



Estonia await Fifa punishment after failing to turn up for World Cup qualifying tie

Scotland expect to get win bonus

Meeting to decide destiny of points

A MEETING of Fifa on November 7 will rule on the events at the Kadriorg stadium yesterday. The report of Jean-Marie Gantgen, the Fifa commissioner, and Miroslav Radoman, the referee, as well as a protest letter received from the Estonian Football Association against the decision, will be studied and presented by October 20 to the Fifa Organising Committee for the World Cup.

After the confusion of the farcical events, Fifa issued a statement clarifying exactly what happened. The kick-off time was brought forward after a protest by the Scotland team on Tuesday night was upheld. The protest had maintained that the temporary floodlights installed for the match were not adequate, and this was confirmed by Gantgen.

The decision to move the kick-off time was notified to both teams some five hours before the rearranged start. Gantgen reported that only the Scotland team appeared on the pitch at the new time. The Estonia team was not in the stadium.

The regulations for the preliminary competition of the 1998 World Cup stipulate article six, paragraph six: "If a team does not report for a match — except in cases of force majeure recognised by the organising committee — the team shall be considered as having lost. The match and the three points shall be awarded to their opponents with a score of 3-0."

While Scotland will be delighted to be given the points, the afternoon proved frustrating for the players, especially Billy Dodds, the Aberdeen forward.

He was due to make his first start for Scotland after a substitute appearance in the 2-0 win over Latvia last Saturday. "I am absolutely gutted about this," he said.

"You have no idea how ready I was for this game. I was on a hot streak of scoring and felt I could get a goal for my country. You never know, I might never get the chance again to start a game for Scotland. Even five minutes before the game we thought they were going to turn up, jump off the bus and give us a game."

IT WAS the most one-sided match imaginable. John Collins, captaining his country, led Scotland out for the World Cup qualifier with Estonia here yesterday. All was very nearly what it should have been as his players lined up beside the referee, Miroslav Radoman, and the two line-up men before preparing to kick off. All that was missing was the opposition.

Estonia had refused to accept a rescheduled start of 3pm local time for the game after complaints by the Scottish Football Association on Tuesday night over the unsatisfactory state of the floodlighting. The hosts decided that they would adhere to the previous time-table and arrived at the Kadriorg stadium at 3pm. A few locals applauded

Empty triumph — 1
Forgotten man — 44
But shines — 44

lustily as the players appeared and lights were switched on for a fixture originally intended to begin at 6.45pm.

It had been at 3 o'clock, however, that the referee blew, Billy Dodds rolled the ball forward from the centre-spot to Collins, who took a few steps into the unoccupied territory of Estonia's half, before another shriek of the whistle ended the phantom action. According to Jim Farry, the SFA chief executive, the few available precedents suggest that Scotland will have been deemed to have won 3-0 in a walkover.

That outcome seemed satisfactory to several hundred visiting supporters who are on a Baltic tour that began with the qualifying match with Latvia on Saturday. "One team in Tallinn," they sang, and for once a football chant



They think it's walkover: The referee brings the phantom match to an end and the Scotland players leave the pitch in a deserted Kadriorg stadium yesterday

was possessed of complete accuracy. Later, these visitors bellowed out the appeal, "All we are saying is give us a game", but there was no genuine rancour.

Whimsy was one noticeable response to the quirky non-events and, after Scotland had

left the pitch, a fan in yellow T-shirt and kit did run onto the field to kick a ball into the empty net. Underlying the jests, however, was an air of melancholy. It is a mood that will deepen when Estonia are punished by Fifa, football's world governing body, perhaps by a fine as well as the forfeit of the match.

The antics of Scottish supporters will also have stoked their resentment. "We are not happy, but we have to accept that we have lost the points," Aivar Pohlak, vice-president of the Estonian FA, said. "This is the SFA's responsibility." The visitors' complaints may have persuaded the Fifa commissioner at this tie, Jean-Marie Gantgen, of Luxembourg, but the local people regarded them as unreasonable.

The existing illumination at the humble little stadium was known to be inadequate and it

had been supplemented by temporary equipment brought over from Finland. That, however, was placed on platforms only slightly above the level of the pitch.

Some patches of the field were in deep shadow and a goalkeeper facing a cross from one particular wing found himself staring into the glare. "Our protest was based on a sporting principle," Farry said. "Our goalkeeper could not see the ball coming in from the left-hand side."

Although the inconvenience of it all has enraged the Estonians, who state that Italy played here under the same circumstances, any reasonable observer would agree that the conditions were unacceptable. The SFA's views were communicated to Fifa, in Zurich. Yesterday morning, Farry found that Gantgen, the

commissioner, was in agreement with him. "It was his firm view that conditions did not meet Fifa's minimum requirements," said the chief executive.

An emergency sub-committee of Fifa made the decision to bring forward the kick-off and both countries were informed of this final ruling at 9am yesterday morning. SFA officials then spread through Tallinn, visiting hotels, burger bars, restaurants and pubs to inform supporters of the change. No such spirit of co-operation touched the Estonian FA.

They viewed the new arrangements as wholly unfair to local supporters who, still at work, would be unavailable to attend. "It's important that we have sympathy for the Estonians," Farry said. "I wouldn't like to find a game at Hampden Park switched from eight

o'clock to midday. It leaves a lot to be done regarding policing and other arrangements, but if you are instructed by Fifa then you have to comply."

The Estonia team remained at their camp in Kehra, some 30 miles away, but Scotland prepared and warmed up in the conviction that their opponents would make a late arrival. The grievances of the Estonian FA may, at least in part, spring from financial considerations, since rights for live coverage of the game, with its 6.45 kick-off, had been sold. "Finance was mentioned," Farry confirmed.

Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, brushed aside the suggestion that the Estonians, with six hours' notice, could not arrive in time. "We were here at 1pm despite considerable inconvenience to ourselves," he added. In 124

years of international football, no Scotland side has ever found itself in such circumstances before and the consequences have still to be assessed.

The captain, Gary McAllister, for example, was due to serve his one-match suspension in this game and Brown fears it may now be applied to a more testing fixture, against Sweden, next month. The cancelled match yesterday also cost Dodds an opportunity to start his first game for Scotland.

Estonia, however, may suffer the greatest pain of all when Fifa decide on the extent of the sanctions to be applied to them.

SCOTLAND (4-3-3): A Gorman (Rangers); J McNamee (Celtic); T Boyd (Celtic); C Calderwood (Motherwell); P Forsyth (Motherwell); J McGinley (Celtic); C Barry (Celtic); P Lambert (Barnsley); J Collins (Aberdeen); J McGinley (Barnsley); W Dodds (Aberdeen); D Jackson (Preston).

Events that left fans in the dark

SCOTLAND'S three-second non-match in Estonia was the culmination of a farcical series of events that began to unfold on Tuesday afternoon. The timetable of events was as follows (all times BST):

Tuesday 4pm: Match is thrown into doubt by a potential problem with floodlighting at the Kadriorg stadium.

7.15pm: Fifa announces that the game will go ahead at 4.45pm the next day despite a protest by Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, who wanted an earlier kick-off.

Wednesday 9.15am: Fifa confirms that the kick-off will be brought forward to 3pm after further protests from the Scottish camp.

10.30am: The game is now scheduled to kick off at 1pm although callers to the Estonia FA are still being told the game will kick off at 4.45.

11.05am: The Scotland team arrive at the stadium.

11.30am: Estonia FA officials arrive 90 minutes before the revised kick-off and reveal that the Estonia team are still 60 miles from the stadium as the Fifa deadline for their arrival passes.

11.45am: The deadline for handing team-sheets to the referee passes with no sign of the Estonia team.

12.20pm: Scotland players warm up on the pitch. Scottish supporters begin to enter the ground but there are no home fans.

12.30pm: Fifa confirms that the match is scheduled to go ahead at 1pm.

1pm: Estonia fail to arrive at the stadium. The referee blows his whistle to start the match and Scotland kick off without any opponents. The referee blows again after three seconds to signal the game is abandoned.



Jean-Marie Gantgen, the Fifa commissioner, considers what action should be taken before the ruling that led to the Scotland match in Estonia being abandoned

Game of many mishaps

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE Scotland v Estonia affair is just the latest in a long line of footballing debacles.

Two years ago, the game in Spain was in turmoil when, after the relegation of two sides for financial irregularities, it was decided that the clubs had not merited such harsh punishment. Both teams were reinstated but two other teams had already taken their place. In the end the fixture list was rewritten and the division expanded to accommodate all four sides.

The 1982 World Cup match between West Germany and Austria saw the sides going into the game knowing that a 1-0 victory to the Germans would ensure that they both progressed, at the expense of Algeria. The required result duly followed in a game almost totally devoid of attacking football.

The African qualifying group for the 1974 World Cup

finals was a curious affair. The match between Ghana and Nigeria was abandoned with Nigeria leading 3-2, but Ghana were awarded the game 2-0. The game between Morocco and Zaire was never

played, but Zaire were also awarded a 2-0 victory.

The crucial South American qualifying game for the 1990 World Cup between Brazil and Chile was abandoned after 65 minutes with Brazil leading 1-0. A flare had been thrown at the Chile goalkeeper, and his team-mates carried him off. However, it transpired that the flare had not actually hit him, and his bleeding was self-inflicted. Brazil were awarded the points and Chile were excluded from the 1994 finals.

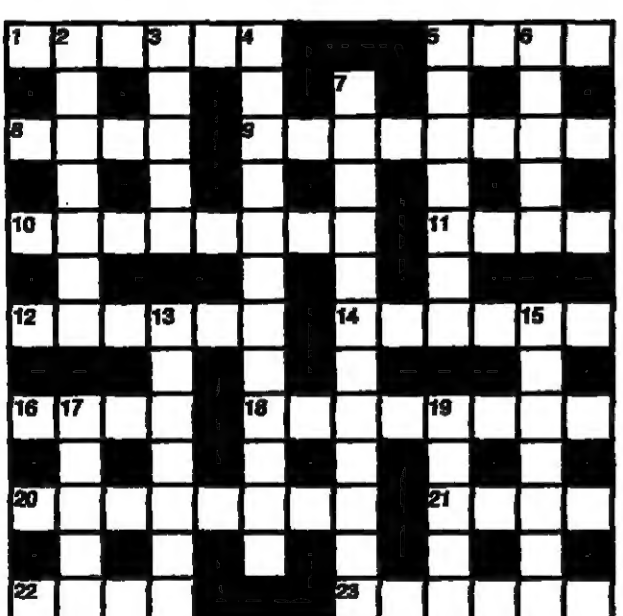
In the European championship of 1960, when games were played in the home team's country, Spain were drawn to play the Soviet Union in the quarter-finals. General Franco forbade the Spaniards from playing in a communist country and so they withdrew. Four years later, Greece were drawn to play Albania. As the countries were at war, Greece withdrew and Albania went through.

MATCHES THAT NEVER WERE

- 1982: International between Ireland and England was abandoned after rioting by visiting supporters.
- 1980: World Cup qualifier between Brazil and Chile was abandoned when Chile goalkeeper Rogee incurred injury after flares were thrown on pitch.
- 1982: Costa Rica did not turn up to play El Salvador in World Cup qualifier because of political unrest.
- 1974: Soviet Union refused to play World Cup qualifier against Chile in Santiago for political reasons and were disqualified.
- 1974: Nigeria's World Cup qualifier against Ghana was abandoned after crowd trouble. Nigeria were subsequently banned from the finals.
- 1964: Greece did not play Albania in the European championship because the countries were officially at war.
- 1960: Spain refused to travel to the Soviet Union in the European Cup on General Franco's orders and were disqualified.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 909 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



ACROSS

- 1 Fortinbras in Prince (Hamlet) (6)
- 5 Sunbathe (4)
- 8 Venerable Eng. historian (4)
- 9 Storyteller (8)
- 10 Absence of light (8)
- 11 Wheel-holding spindle (4)
- 12 Announcer, precursor (6)
- 14 Untouched, unused (6)
- 16 Wearing shoes (4)
- 18 Put into order: run (event) (8)
- 20 Manchester massacre (1819) (8)
- 21 Taunt, spur on (4)
- 22 Bulk: quantity of matter (4)

DOWN

- 2 Manage, make to work (7)
- 3 Fate of Deutschland, of Hesperus (5)
- 4 "— went to town" (US song) (6)
- 5 Brazenly obvious (7)
- 6 Backless seat (5)
- 7 Wrap over egg pyjamas (8,4)
- 13 Deal with: speak to (7)
- 15 Sequence of triggered events (7)
- 17 African "dog" (5)
- 19 Period of 10 (5)

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THE WINNER will receive a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on British Midland's domestic or international network.

THE RUNNER-UP will receive a return ticket to anywhere on British Midland's domestic network. British Midland offers an extensive range of departure and destination points throughout the UK as well as Europe. As the UK's second largest scheduled service airline and Heathrow's second biggest user, it operates a fleet of 35 aircraft on over 1200 flights per week throughout the UK and Europe. All flights are subject to availability.



Post your entry to Times Two Crossword, PO Box 6886, London E2 8SP to arrive by next Monday. The winners' names and solution will appear on Wednesday.

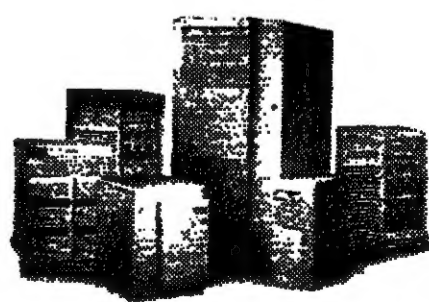
Name/Address

SOLUTION TO NO 908

ACROSS: 6 Glazier 7 Abhor 9 Pinch 10 Praised 11 Belle Epoque 14 Catastrophe 17 Throw in 19 Loser 21 Haste 22 Outside
DOWN: 1 Dawn 2 Nicholas 3 Triple 4 Data 5 Physique 6 Gape 8 Rudder 11 Buttriss 12 Populate 13 Scotch 15 Random 16 True 18 When 20 Silt

MORSE

Détente



Whilst others are fighting religious wars about Microsoft NT versus UNIX, Hewlett-Packard and MorseData are working together to integrate them.

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